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ARABIAN TALES.

VOL. I.

OR,

ARABIAN NIGHTS
ENTERTAINMENTS.

VOL. V.

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ARABIAN TALES;
OR,
A CONTINUATION
OF THE
Arabian Nights Entertainments.

CONSISTING OF
STORIES
RELATED BY THE
SULTANA OF THE INDIES,
To divert her Husband from the Performance of a rash Vow;
EXHIBITING
A most interesting View of the RELIGION, LAWS,
MANNERS, CUSTOMS, ARTS, and LITERATURE,
— OF THE
NATIONS OF THE EAST;
and
Affording a rich Fund of the most pleasing Amusement,
which Fictitious Writings can supply.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Newly translated from the Original Arabic into French,
By DOM CHAVIS, a native Arab, and M. CAZOTTE, Member
of the Academy of Dijon.

And translated from the French into English,
By ROBERT HERON.

VOL. I.

EDINBURGH,

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PREFACE

BY

THE TRANSLATOR.

NEARLY a century has now elapsed, since the collection of Eastern Tales, so well known among us by the title of *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, was first offered to the curiosity and admiration of Europe. The romances of knight-errantry had then lost that popularity which they held for ages, and had been ridiculed into disrepute. The rage for amusement had indeed called forth another species of fictitious writings; but a species which unhappily possessed neither the wild dignity of the Romance, nor displayed that assemblage of the characters, manners, and incidents of familiar life, which confers a value on our best modern Novels. Most of those compositions were vile effusions of prurient dulness, whose perfection consisted in detailing the intricacies, and unveiling the looser scenes of licentious intrigue. The wanton episodes of Ariosto, and the lewd,

though witty tales of Boccace, were imitated, till the same school produced the low and almost insipid obscenities of a Behn, a Manley, and a Heywood. Such books were, however, calculated, almost exclusively, for the debauchee and the woman of pleasure: and something was therefore wanted for the entertainment of those, who chose to withdraw the mind occasionally from the realities of life, yet were unwilling to debase imagination, by turning it to dwell on the brutal grossness of sensual indulgence.

IF those Eastern Tales were presented to the European public, at a season which seems to have been peculiarly favourable for their reception; there was, however, still more in their character than in the circumstances of the time, to recommend them to that eager and general interest which they immediately commanded among all classes of readers. The style in which they were written, and the artifice by which they were interwoven together, were, if not absolutely new, yet strange and uncommon. For, although the stories in Ovid's books of *Metamorphoses*, be connected by means, which, at least in slightness and insufficiency for the purpose of compacting parts into a whole, bear
some

some resemblance to the slender thread by which the narratives of the *Thousand and One Nights* are feebly and awkwardly held together ; and although Chaucer's *Canterbury tales*, the multiplicity of broken adventures strangely jumbled together in the *Orlando Furioso*, and, almost equally, the half-Gothic, half-classical fabric of *Spencer's Fairy Queen*, betray a *truly Oriental unskilfulness* in the art of Arrangement : Yet, with these works, the more passionate readers of the *Arabian Nights Entertainments* were, for the most part, little acquainted ; and, where there was so much novelty in so many other respects, a small Difference in Structure was, by the effect of association, naturally increased greatly above its real magnitude.

THE *manners and customs* exhibited in those Tales, were at the same time much more strange and singular, than the artlessness of their connection, or the tedious copiousness of narrative which distinguished them. Beauties, cooped up together by scores, or perhaps hundreds, in a Haram, all for the amusement of one man ; and he often indifferent, feeble, old, and fitter to repose in the grave or the hospital, than to riot on the nuptial couch : Festive entertainments, unenlivened by the sprightly

ly gaieties of the fair sex, or the cheering influence of wine: Wives wearing drawers and trousers like their husbands, and men arrayed in loose robes like their wives, yet at the same time cherishing, as so many goats, each a venerable length of beard: Pastry-cooks making such a figure in society, as if the perfection of human art were displayed in the composition of a cream-tart or a pye: The art of writing esteemed, singly, a qualification fitting those skilled in it for the most dignified offices in civil life, as if the smallest possible portion of intellect were not adequate to the formation of the letters in the alphabet, and the joining of these into words and lines: Ablutions performed, many times a day, and, at every different time, as scrupulously as Swift's *Stephon* washed himself, when he was to mount the bed of his angel-*Chloe*: Prayers repeated by all ranks, with serious devotion, almost as often in the day, as our men of fashion call upon their Maker in contemptuous scorn, or in idle merriment: The Code of Religion almost as frequently and fondly quoted, as our professed wits introduce sily into their conversation *fresh* repartees from Joe Miller, or *original* anecdotes from the Tell-Tale: Judicial astrology constituting the great rule of human life, and every man

man and woman, as surely as they come into the world, having their fortunes subjected to the capricious influence of this or that star :— All these phænomena are so remote from the customs and manners of Europe, that, when exhibited as entering into the ordinary system of human affairs, they could not fail to confer, in our eyes, a considerable share of amusive novelty, on the characters and events with which they were connected.

YET, it is probable that the *machinery* contributed, more than any other particular in their character, to obtain to the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, the preference over most of the other works of imagination which were common in Europe at the time of their first appearance. Magicians, Genies, Fairies, Lamps, Rings, and other Talismans, dance in such profusion through those volumes, as could not but make the reader wonder and stare, who was acquainted only with witches mounted on broomsticks,—and with little viewless elves, dancing occasionally by moon-light, in small circles on the green, or, in their greatest splendour and festivity, only lighting up, for their midnight revels, the deserted hall of some ruinous castle. It has been observed, I think, by Dr Hawkefworth,

Hawkesworth, in some one of the first numbers of the *Adventurer*, that these Tales please, because, even their machinery, wild and wonderful as it is, has its laws, and the Magicians and Enchanters perform nothing but what was to be naturally expected from such beings, after we had once granted them existence, and dignified them with power. But, I should rather suppose that the very contrary is the truth of the fact. It is surely the strangeness, the unknown nature, the anomalous character of the supernatural agents here employed, that enables them to operate so powerfully on our hopes, fears, curiosities, sympathies, and, in short, on all the feelings of our hearts. We see men and women, who possess qualities to recommend them to our favour, subjected to the influence of beings whose good or ill will, power or weakness, attention or neglect, are regulated by motives and circumstances which we cannot comprehend: and hence, we naturally tremble for their fate, with the same anxious concern, as we should for a friend wandering, in a dark night, amidst torrents and precipices,—or preparing to land on a strange island, while he knew not whether he should be received, on the shore, by cannibals waiting to tear him piece-meal, and devour him,—

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or by gentle beings, disposed to cherish him with fond hospitality. Give the human agents whom you employ, qualities to command good will and esteem; let their manners be natural, and their sentiments the genuine effusions of the human heart, in such circumstances as those they are placed in; and then, perhaps, the more singular their adventures, the wilder the scenes in which they are exposed, the more capricious the beings to whose power they are subjected, and the more seemingly inadequate the means by which all the changes in their fate are accomplished; so much the more irresistibly will they engage, and transport, and chain down the attention, and sway the passions of the spectator, or the reader.

ADD to these considerations, that, beside the advantages which they seem to derive from the strangeness of their texture, and from the novelty and marvellous nature of the objects which they exhibit; those Eastern Tales possess great real merit of another species. At times, even amid the florid verbosity conspicuous in them, as in other Oriental compositions, they afford pleasing descriptions of the scenes of external nature. The most agitated workings of the human heart are often displayed in them, with

a masterly hand. Being a collection, they contain a medley of comic, tragic, and heroic adventures, the very number and variety of which must necessarily give them considerable power to please. And, I know not if even the gold, jewels, pearls, rubies, emeralds, the bales of rich stuffs, and superb pellices, the crowded kans, luxurious gardens, and apartments *beyond description sumptuous*, which are so liberally lavished through those Tales, and so ostentatiously described wherever they occur, have not insensibly a greater influence in dazzling and amusing the mind of the reader, than perhaps the pupil of taste will be willing to allow.—Such are the tales which I remember to have eagerly preferred, in the days of childish credulity, to the Seven Wonders of the World, the Adventures of Jack the Giant-Killer, the Story of the Seven Wise Masters, and even to the History of the Nine Worthies:—And such seem to be the more striking peculiarities in their character, by which they have pleased, and still continue to please, almost all ages, all ranks, and all different capacities.

LITERARY imposition has been frequently attempted with great success; and it was doubted by many, for some time after the publication

tion of the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, that, although represented as compositions of the East, they had been actually fabricated in Europe. Instances have not been wanting, to justify this suspicion. It was usual among the classical scholars who flourished about the æra of the revival of Letters, to try their proficiency, by producing forgeries in the names of their favourite Greek or Roman authors, with which they now and then actually deceived one another. It had been usual, too, among the Sophists of antiquity, to compose declamations and epistles in the names of celebrated personages, the incidents of whose lives afforded them suitable materials: and it is well known what critical hardiness and acumen the doughty Bentley displayed, in detecting the forgery of the epistles of Phalaris. The letters of the Turkish Spy, the Castle of Otranto, the Poems of Rowley, not to name innumerable other works of the same cast, are good proofs, that the Literati of the present age, have not lost either the spirit or the power of literary imposition. But the character of the Arabian Tales is so truly Eastern; they bear so many marks which no European hand could have impressed, and carry in them so much of that internal evidence which enforces

conviction, still more powerfully than the strongest external testimony ; that one could hardly have thought it possible for men of learning to remain long in doubt about their authenticity, had not a writer of no less eminence than Dr Beattie, even within these last eight or ten years, expressed himself uncertain whether they were translated or fabricated by M. Galland. However, the Doctor's doubts have probably been satisfied by this time ; for, independently of the King of France's library, in which the originals have been long deposited, the authenticity of these Tales has been fully proved by Colonel Capper ; and an Arabic copy of them is at this very time, I believe, in the hands of the learned Dr Joseph White of Oxford. It was once even talked, that the British public might sooner or later be favoured with a translation of them from the original language by the Doctor's pen ; in which they would display more of a genuine Oriental cast, and retain more of their native graces, than in the version of Galland ; who, as is common with his countrymen, upon similar occasions, has given too much of a Frenchified air to the Eastern manners and modes of address. But, as Major Davy has returned to the East, Mr Badcock is dead, and Dr Parr now immersed in politics
and

and preface-writing; there is some reason to fear, that good Dr White, thus deprived of the assistants of his former studies, and harassed by the laborious activity of a college life, may be deterred from accomplishing so arduous a task.

THE following volumes come indeed in a questionable shape. For, why, it may be asked, have not DOM DENNIS CHAVIS and M. CAZOTTE, stood forward personally to state the circumstances of their undertaking? Why has it been left to nameless Editors to assert the authenticity of these Tales, and explain their connection with the *Thousand and One Nights*?—But, this notwithstanding, these additional Tales are undoubtedly genuine. I have not been informed whether they make a part of Dr White's copy; but I believe they are well known to be in the King of France's library, as is represented in the advertisement by the French Editors. However, the great evidence of the authenticity of these, as of the former Tales, is internal. The scenery, characters, incidents, manners, customs, allusions, and cast of composition, are all Oriental. As a painter may sketch the outline, and hit the leading features of a countenance, while he fails in the nicer touches, and cannot commu-

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nicate that characteristic air which gives unity and resemblance to the whole; so, in all the imitations of the Oriental style of writing, which we have yet seen, there has still been somewhat of an European complexion: The prominences and great outlines have been successfully imitated; but the delicate finishing, the due proportion of lights and shades, justly intermingled, have still been wanting to complete the deception. It is indeed from minute and accidental particulars, which to a forger or imitator will not naturally appear of sufficient consequence to be attended to, that the genuineness of any composition is best ascertained. From such particulars have the best proofs of the authority of the Gospels been drawn. And the circumstance, of an unconnected memorandum having been written across one of the celebrated letters of Queen Mary, has ever appeared to me an almost irrefragable proof of the authenticity, at least, of that letter. To such internal evidence, therefore, would I appeal in support of the authenticity of the following Tales. They are entirely Eastern in their whole structure. I have been able to observe nothing in them, which can be considered as having slipped from a Frenchman's pen, at some moment when he happened to forget that he was writing

writing in an assumed character and manner. I have even remarked, singular as the circumstance may appear, that while every thing is correctly Oriental in the text, the two Translators have sometimes committed errors of ignorance in their attempts to explain difficulties and peculiarities in the notes. Upon the whole, were I to hazard a conjecture, I should suppose that advantage may have been taken of the popularity of the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, and these new stories interwoven into the same texture, in order to give them the same currency: but Eastern they undoubtedly are.

THEIR merits, as Tales, and as Compositions, are certainly not inferior to those of the former. They are, like those, a medley of comic, tragic, and heroic Tales. Their machinery is the same, and employed with equal skill. They seem to afford several juster and happier displays of the discriminations of personal character. The stories of Haroun Alraschid and the Fair Zutulbé, of Simousthapha and Ifetilsone, of Giafar and Chebib, and of the Gallant Habib, are certainly among the most amusing which are any where to be met with. Yet it is not to be expected that they shall be read with the same eagerness as the former Arabian

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Tales.

Tales. The strangeness and the novelty are now worn off. We are now too familiar with the Genies, Magicians, Boxes and Rings, to view them with the same *gawky* admiration and curiosity, as when they were first introduced to us. We know what they *can* do, and are therefore likely to be less anxious about what they *may* do.

I CANNOT boast of having executed this Translation with the happiest skill. I was willing to employ all the pains I could upon it: But my Booksellers have found themselves obliged to hurry forward the book, and to urge my progress with such earnestness, that, mean as the character is, of a Translator from a Translation, I am much afraid that my present appearance will do but little credit even to this character. I am, however, conscious of having honestly done all I could. And yet, it is mortifying to think, that, *here* at least, a blundering Translator will less readily be pardoned, since the *Principles of Translation* have been so ably explained in an anonymous essay, published last Summer, which, whoever be its author, is certainly a fine monument of elegant erudition, and of delicacy of taste.

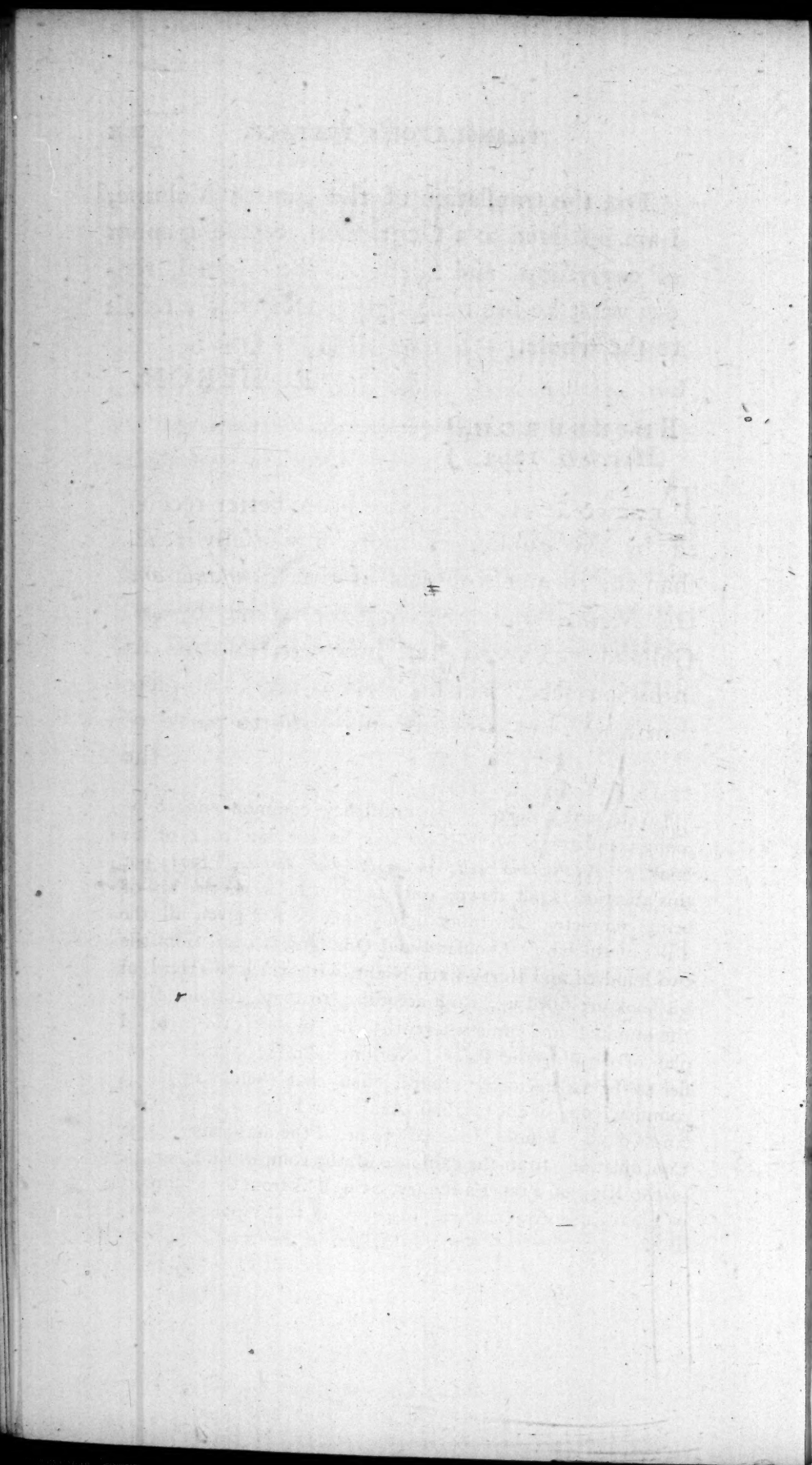
FOR

For the translation of the Fourth Volume, I am indebted to a Gentleman, whose manner of expression, and fidelity to the original, render what he has obligingly performed, a credit to the whole.

R. HERON.

EDINBURGH, }
March 6. 1792. }

ADVER.



ADVERTISEMENT

BY

THE FRENCH EDITORS.

FEW works of fancy have been better received by the public, or more universally read, than the former volumes of the *Thousand and One Nights*, translated from the Arabic by M. Galland. This writer, however, informs us in his preface, that his work is not a complete translation, but contains only a fourth part * of the

* Yet, with a degree of inconsistency common enough among translators, *M. Galland* says, in the last page of his book, "*A thousand and one nights had elapsed*," &c.; but this assertion is put down, only to give the work the air of being complete. It cannot signify that he had given all the Tales of the whole *Thousand and One Nights* : for, from the two hundred and thirty-sixth Night, with which two thirds of his book are filled up, (and according to some editions, from the hundred and ninety seventh), he neglects the original plan of dividing the Tales. Nothing is more certain, or easier to be satisfactorily proved, than that there was not a complete copy of the original Arabic in France in *M. Galland's* days. Besides, it is easy to prove the authority of this Continuation, from the existence of the complete manuscript in the King of France's library, as well as from the testimony of the learned Arabian who placed it in that repository, and of the man of letters who assisted him in the translation.

the original Arabic Collection; the remainder of which had not at that time been obtained from the East. But a copy of the whole has been since brought into Europe, and deposited in the King of France's library, by DOM DENNIS CHAVIS, a native Arab, and priest of the congregation of St Basil, who was invited to Paris by Government, and enjoyed the patronage of Baron Breteuil, a minister distinguished for his extensive and enlightened views of policy, and for his zeal to promote the advancement of the arts and sciences. That learned Arabian was induced to undertake the task of enriching our literature with a translation of the remaining part of the *Thousand and One Nights*. That he might do the fuller justice to his originals, in translating them into a language which was not vernacular to himself, he accepted the assistance of M. CAZOTTE, well known as the author of the poem of *Ollivier*, of the *Diable Amoureux*, of the *Lord Impromptu*, and of various other productions which have been well received by the public.

It may be presumed that the beauties of the original have been faithfully transfused into the version, by an able Translator, zealous to do honour to his Country and to his Native Language;

Language; and that they can have lost nothing in the hands of M. Cazotte, whose own works are so eminently distinguished by gaiety, delicacy, wit, and Attic elegance.

WE are therefore persuaded, that this Continuation of the *Thousand and One Nights*, which we now present to the public, will not be found inferior to the former volumes translated by M. Galland. The same variety of matter, the same wild play of imagination, and the same power to arrest and detain the attention, characterize both. This is, as it were, the narrative of another journey to explore the wide regions of the East, with which we are in general but very little acquainted. The whole collection not only affords a most amusing species of reading, but forms a body of valuable information, concerning the religion, manners, customs, characters, and principles of action displayed among the inhabitants of a great part of Asia.

CON-

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ARABIAN TALES:
BEING A
CONTINUATION
OF THE
THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS.

THE story of the Sultan of Persia, and the two jealous sisters, seemed to have afforded great pleasure to Sultan Schahriar, whose curiosity was still to be kept up by a succession of interesting tales.

"Sister," said Dinarzade to Scheherazade, "this marriage of Khosrouschah, and the series of interesting events connected with it, lead me to recollect the marriage of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid with the princess of Persia, and the fair Zutulbé, which, in the same manner, took place after some of those nocturnal rambles through Bagdad, with which he so often amused himself in disguise. I have been much entertained when you told me the stories of these marriages, and have no doubt but we should find them diverting, if you would now repeat them."

"Sister," replied the fair Sultana, "I have always been too much interested in the adventures of Haroun Alraschid, to forget any circumstance of the incidents of his life that has been handed down to us. If my Lord, the Sultan, chooses to

honour me with his attention, I shall immediately gratify your curiosity."—The Sultan testified his wish to hear the relation; and Scheherazade began in these words.

The ROBBER-CALIPH; or, Adventures of Haroun Alraschid, with the Princess of Persia, and the fair Zutulbé.

THE nobles, the viziers, and even several of the tributary princes, were assembled at Bagdad, upon the occasion of the festival of Haraphat *, to join in the celebration of the usual solemnities. No expence was spared, no rite omitted, that could give dignity to the ceremonies of religion, or splendour to the Caliph's court. Melodious voices resounded through the wide concave of the high mosque; perfumes shed a rich fragrance through the air; the blood of victims besprinkled the altar, around which stood the different orders of the priesthood: nothing, in short, was wanting, that could serve to express to heaven and earth the piety of the Commander of the faithful, the greatest of the sovereigns of the world. But the ceremonies were tedious. Haroun was, moreover, fatigued by receiving and attending to the homage of so many princes and nobles; and, at last, absolutely overpowered with weariness and impatience,

"Giasar," said he, addressing himself to his grand vizier, the chief of the Barmecide family, "the festival of our great Prophet should inspire the heart with joy; yet, in spite of all my endeavours against it, I feel a depression of spirits gain-
ing

* The Musulman festival of Haraphat is chiefly distinguished by the offering of animal sacrifices.

ing upon me. Amidst the pomp and brilliancy of this numerous assembly, I am oppressed with unaccountable dissatisfaction and chagrin. I need something to divert me : But, in a day like this, I may indulge in nothing, not immediately beneficial to my people. You and I will disguise ourselves, and go into Bagdad ; we will there distribute alms among the poor, and seek out objects of misfortune whom we may relieve. I wish to see with my own eyes, whether the people be happy under my government,—whether the officers of justice and of the police do their duty.”

Giafar was ready to obey the wishes of the Caliph. They went together into a secret apartment, changed their dress, and, taking each a thousand pieces of gold, sallied forth from the palace. They passed through the streets and squares of the city, and gave alms to every poor person they met with. Passing through one quarter of the city, they found a woman sitting on the pavement, in the middle of the street : she held out her hand to the Caliph, and asked his charity for the love of God. The prince was struck with the beauty of the arm held out to him : it was exquisitely turned, and white as alabaster. He gave Giafar a piece of gold for her, which the vizier put into her hand.

The woman, upon receiving this present, shut her hand upon it ; but, feeling by its size and weight, that it was not one of those small pieces which are usually given in alms, she removed her fingers, and saw it to be gold. Immediately calling aloud after Giafar—

“ Oh ! handsome young man,” said she, as soon as he was near enough to hear her,

"it is gold that you have given me. Do you intend it as alms? or, have you some other purpose?" "It is not I, Madam, that made the present," replied Giafar, "but the young man who is with me." "Pray, intreat him," returned the woman, "to explain his reasons for this extraordinary liberality?" Giafar mentioned the urgency of the woman's request to the Caliph, and was ordered to bid her make herself easy as to the motives of his benevolence; for they were none other but charity and the love of God. "As this is the case, tell my benefactor," replied the woman, "that I shall offer my prayers to God, that his life may be prolonged."

The Caliph, informed by Giafar, in what manner the woman had received his present, and what wishes she had formed for the welfare of the giver, sent him instantly back to her, "Ask," said Haroun, "whether she is married: if she is unmarried, tell her, that I propose to take her to wife."

Giafar delivered the message. The woman replied, that she was unmarried, and willing to marry a young man who had shewn her so much kindness, if he were rich enough to allow her a suitable dowry. "Who can this woman be," added Giafar, as he repeated this answer to his master, "who doubts of the commander of the faithful's ability to assign her a dowry?"

"My disguise excuses her," said the Caliph; "learn from her, what dowry she desires." The grand vizier obeyed: the woman's answer was, "My dowry must be equal to a year's tribute of the cities of Ispahan and Karassin."

At this reply, Giafar was somewhat surprised. The Caliph had gone on towards the palace.
Giafar

Giafar hastened after him, to give an account of the lady's demand. The Caliph seemed to be satisfied: "Return," said he, "and let her know, what must surely astonish her, that I accept her terms."

The grand vizier immediately returns to the fair unknown, and delivers the Caliph's message. "Who may this be," said she, "who is able to give such a dowry? What, pray, are his qualities and his dignity?"

"He of whom I speak," replied Giafar, "is Haroun Alraschid, Commander of the faithful."

At the name of the Caliph making her such a proposal, the woman rose, and, covering herself with her clothes, that she might appear with the more decency and modesty before the vizier, gave thanks to God, and said, "If he be the Caliph who asks me in marriage, I shall be pleased to belong to him: you may signify to him my consent." Giafar gives an account to the Caliph of this last conversation, and describes, in two words, her carriage, air, and manner. The Caliph gives immediate orders to one of the most venerable women in his palace, to go with a number of slaves to find this unknown fair one, and conduct her to the baths in the palace.

When she came out of the bath, they clothed her in gay attire. Her dress was set off with diamonds, and rich jewels of all sorts. She was conducted into one of the best apartments in the palace. The chief of the eunuchs went immediately to inform the Caliph, that his orders were obeyed; upon which the Caliph ordered him to bring the cadi to execute the marriage-contract.

When evening came, Haroun retired to his wife's apartment. She, on perceiving him, pro-

trated herself before him, and, in ardent language, expressed her gratitude for his condescension and goodness. The Caliph, sitting down, made her sit beside him, and asked, "Madam, who is your father? What family are you of, to have asked me so large a dowry?"

"Prince of the faithful," replied she, modestly casting her eyes on the ground, "you see before you, a descendant from Kassera-Aboche-roan: reverse of fortune, and my unhappy destiny, reduced me to the state in which you found me."

"Princess," replied the Caliph, "you are grand-daughter to Kassera, so dishonourably famous for the deeds of tyranny with which he disgraced his reign. He exercised the most shocking cruelties upon his subjects."

"It was that tyranny," returned the princess, "which reduced his children to beg their bread."

"But," returned the Caliph, "I have been assured, that he at length saw his errors and passionate excesses in their true light, and, in the end of his reign, ruled with great moderation, and distributed justice with such impartiality, that the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, shared his bounty."

"And for this, too," replied the Princess, "God now rewards his posterity, by raising a daughter of his from the streets, to the honour of wife to the Commander of the Faithful."

Haroun Alraschid was much moved by so sensible a reply: He clasped her in his arms, and testified, by the most tender embraces, how he was pleased with the conquest he had made. But his happiness was soon interrupted by a disagreeable reflection.

"Pardon

"Pardon me, Princess, if I am forced from your arms by a vow which I happen to have made. I am at this moment the most unhappy of men! This morning, in the ardour of my zeal, and while I could have no idea what a treasure fortune was to put in my way to-day, I bound myself, in honour of the Prophet, by a solemn and irrevocable oath, not to cohabit, for a whole year, with the first woman whom I should marry. You cannot conceive how bitterly I now feel my imprudence; but I could not foresee what a felicity it was to deprive me of; and you, whose devotion seems so pure, must perceive, that the vow which I have uttered is sacred, and join with me in concerting, how to reconcile it best with my happiness."

The lady, whatever impression these words might make upon her mind, could only express her resignation and consent, by bowing her head, and casting her eyes on the ground. The Caliph retired. He had discovered in the Persian princess so much merit, and so many charms, that he could not help promising himself much happiness in a more intimate intercourse with her. But, continuing firm to his oath, he would not expose himself to the temptation to break it; and from this moment, therefore, he ceased to see her; only took care, that such attention should be paid to her, that she might see that she was neither neglected nor forgotten, and that the Caliph, although he had now time to reflect upon the choice which he had made, did not repent of it.

The year came, at length, to an end. The last day of it was the anniversary of the high festival of Haraphat. The Caliph, Giafar his
grand

grand vizier, and Mefrour, chief of his eunuchs, went together into Bagdad. They went through the streets in disguise; and every thing appeared to be in good order.

Returning to the palace, the Caliph passed nearby a pastry-cook's shop, which had such an air of neatness, that he became curious to try the pastry, of which great abundance was set out for sale, and which had the most inviting aspect and smell.

As soon as Haroun regained his apartment, he directed one of his officers to repair to the cook's shop, and to order an hundred *cataifs**. The officer executed the Caliph's commission; and, after seeing the hundred *cataifs* made in his presence, had them carried to the palace. No sooner had the Caliph received the pastry, than he put a piece of gold into each *cataif*, covered them with pistachio nuts, strewed them with sugar, and sent the whole to his wife, the Persian princess; giving her notice, at the same time, that as the year of his vow was now expired, the Commander of the Faithful would spend the night with her. The eunuch who conveyed the message, had orders, at the same time, to enquire, whether there were any thing else in which the Caliph could gratify the wishes of the princess? "Nothing," replied the grand-daughter of Kassera: "to see the Caliph, will completely gratify all my wishes."

Haroun was much pleased with so prudent a reply. But, being very desirous of doing something which might particularly oblige his young wife, he ordered Mefrour to insist that she should think

* *Cataifs* are a sort of small tarts.

think of something in which he might do her pleasure.

"Since the Caliph," replied she to Mesrour, "is so kind, tell him, that I should wish to have a thousand pieces of gold, and a confidential female servant to attend me into the city, where I may give alms, in disguise, to the poor; in whose number, only a year ago, I myself was one."

The Caliph, smiling at the request, gave orders that it should be immediately complied with. The princess and her female attendant pass through the streets of Bagdad, and give alms upon all sides, till the thousand pieces of gold are wholly distributed.

The day was excessively hot. The princess, on her return to the palace, felt herself exceedingly thirsty. She mentioned her uneasiness to her companion. The latter, perceiving a water-carrier, proposed that he should be called. "I cannot bear, however," said the lady, "to drink out of the same vessel that is at the command of every person in the streets, without distinction."

They then advanced to the gate of a palace. The attendant was no sooner at the gate, which was shut with doors of sandal wood, than she perceived, through an open window, a golden lustre, suspended in the porch, from a chain of the same metal. A curtain, richly embroidered, hung before; and two sofas of the finest marble, one on the right side, the other on the left of the gate, formed the rest of the furniture of the apartment.

After observing these things, the attendant knocked at the door. It was immediately opened.

ed. A young man, richly dressed, presenting himself, asked what he could do to serve her. "My Lord," replied she, "you see my daughter: she is fainting with thirst; but she cannot endure to drink out of a water-carrier's pitcher. You will do us a singular favour, in giving her a glass of water."

"It shall be done in a moment, Madam," replied the young man. He, upon this, disappeared, and in an instant returned with a golden cup full of water, which he presented to the woman. She delivered it to the princess; who, taking it in her hand, turned towards the wall, and satisfied her thirst. The woman thanked him, for herself, and in the name of her pretended daughter; and the two ladies, retiring together, returned to the palace.

When the Commander of the faithful had arranged the tarts on the plate, as above mentioned, he at the same time enjoined the eunuch to tell the princess, that he sent her this present as a pledge and sign of peace. The chief eunuch, the bearer of the present and the message, not knowing in what manner the pastry had been secretly seasoned by the Caliph, or of how much importance it was, and thinking nothing more of it than as a very ordinary piece of gallantry, did not deliver the message precisely in the Caliph's words. He imagined, that his chief business was, to announce the Caliph's intention of visiting her; and the princess, equally concerned about this point only, directed the pastry to be set down upon a table in her apartment; and paid no farther heed to it.

Upon her return home, after distributing her alms, she observed the pastry, and conceived that

that it might make a very proper recompense to the person who had given her the glass of water. Addressing her female attendant, therefore, she bade her, "Carry that plate of tarts immediately, and in your own name, to the young man to whom I am obliged for the glass of water, which he gave in so handsome a manner."

The woman went immediately with the pastry. She found the young man sitting upon one of the sofas in the porch: "My daughter and I," said she, "are much obliged to you for your kindness and politeness. Accept, in return, this pastry, as a mark of our gratitude."

"Since it is your pleasure, Madam, to acknowledge so trifling a service in so handsome a manner, I should be afraid of disobliging you, by a refusal to accept your present: put it upon the sofa." This short interview ended with some compliments upon both sides, and the woman returned to the palace.

At this very instant, the watchman of that quarter of the city came to wait on the young man, and pay him the compliments usual at the feast of Haraphat; and, as he ended, asked the gift of the season. Take that plate of *cataifs*, said the young man. The watchman joyfully accepted the present, kissed his benefactor's hand, and returned to his own house, very well pleased.

The watchman's wife, upon seeing him come in with so large and splendid a plate, cried out, "Where had you that plate, husband? Are you such an unhappy wretch as to have stolen it?" "No, wife," replied the watchman, "the Hazeb *, that high officer of the Caliph's, gave it me

* The Hazeb is the first gentleman of the Caliph's bed-chamber.

me in a present—God preserve his life ! Let us eat up the *cataifs*. What dainties they are !”

“ Glutton that thou art !” answered his wife, “ Wouldst thou dare to touch what must have cost so high a price ? Go, sell them and the plate together : such delicacies are not for poor people like us. With the money which you will receive for them, we may buy provisions fitter for the use of our family.”

“ Wife ! wife !” returned the watchman, “ God has sent us the tarts ; I am determined to eat them.”

“ You shall not taste one of them,” replied the wife, in a tone of rage : “ Your son has neither cap nor shoes ; I am almost naked ; and you yourself are in rags. Go instantly, sell the plate, and all that is upon it, and bring home the money.”

The watchman, being thus obliged to yield to his wife, went to the market, and put the plate into the hands of a public crier. A merchant purchased it at a certain price, paid the crier, and carried off his purchase.

On his way home, he began to examine it more particularly, and finding the name of Haroun Alraschid inscribed round the edge, returned hastily to the market ; and, seeking out the crier, bade him, “ Take back your plate which you have stolen from the emperor : Would you ruin me, by bringing me under suspicion of the theft ?”

The crier soon perceived the truth of what the merchant alleged, read the characters engraven upon the edges of the plate, and, in the utmost consternation, hastened to the palace, demanded admision into the presence of the Caliph, and shewed

Shewed him the tarts, with the piece of plate upon which they were placed.

Haroun instantly recognized the plate which he had sent to the princess of Persia, to be served up as one of the dishes in the collation which he intended to take with her in the evening. That great man had the fault of annexing, in his own mind, too much importance to every thing that he did. By the *cataifs* he had expected to occasion an agreeable surprise to his new-married spouse, and to furnish her with means for being liberal to those about her, while she should seem to distribute only so many tarts.

The derangement of this little scheme of gallantry was highly displeasing to him by whom it had been contrived. Another more mortifying reflection at the same time occurred: a present, sent directly from his own hand, had been neglected and despised, notwithstanding the message with which it had been accompanied. At the thought, he became in a violent passion against the princess.

"Tell," said he to the crier in a furious tone, "who gave you these?" "Most potent Caliph," replied the crier, "it was the watchman in such a quarter of the city, who gave them to me to sell."

The Caliph ordered the watchman to be brought, with his head and feet bare, and in chains. The man was seized, fettered with the severity which had been enjoined, and carried before the Caliph. The poor wretch, seeing himself reduced to this condition, began to exclaim against his wife with bitter imprecations. "Accursed creature," said he, "formed to betray man, even by thy endeavours to serve him; even

when thy advice seems to be good, it should not be trusted! Why didst thou not suffer me to eat those *cataifs*! no harm could then have happened me. But thou wast determined to be thrifty, and a good house-wife. Thy dress lost thee thy first husband; and thy dress will continue to occasion mischief, till thy last be gone. Here am I exposed to the indignation of the prince of all the earth.—Come, give me thy advice at present, how I may best extricate myself from my perilous situation; if any thing good can possibly proceed out of thy mouth, which is ever uttering falsehood.”

The Caliph interrupted these complaints, by asking the watchman, who had given him the plate of tarts? “Tell, wretch,” said the angry monarch, “tell the truth, if thou wouldst save thy life.”

“Oh! commander of the faithful!” cried the trembling watchman, “let your highness suspend your resentment, and not destroy the innocent with the guilty! It was your officer, Hazeb Yemaleddin, who gave me the plate for my Haraphat gift.”

At the name of Yemaleddin, the Caliph’s rage seemed to be redoubled. He ordered that officer to be brought before him, with his head and feet bare, his hands bound, and the muslin of his turban tied about his neck. The same decree bore, that the house of this officer should be razed to the ground, and his goods and furniture confiscated.

Those who were charged with the execution of this decree, proceeded immediately to find the Hazeb, invested his house, and knocked at the gate. He was the first to open it himself:

But,

But, great was his astonishment, when the rigorous order of the Caliph was signified to him. The reasons which had moved the Caliph, they did not explain. He immediately expressed the most submissive deference; "I obey," said he, "God, and the prince of the faithful, his vicegerent upon earth."

One of the officers took the Hazeb's turban, and bound the muslin of it about his neck. "Is it by the order of our sovereign," said Yemaleddin, "that you treat me thus?" "Yes," replied the officer, "I am to confiscate your effects, and raze your house to the ground, and to conduct you in chains, with your head and feet bare, before the Caliph. I shall not execute my orders with the most rigid severity: we remember with gratitude how kind you were to us, and that you were always ready to receive us in your house with open hospitality." "Since you," rejoined the Hazeb, "are thus disposed, when you demolish my house, leave some retreat to my aged mother, and my young sister."

Yemaleddin being thus conducted to the foot of the Caliph's throne, prostrated himself before his sovereign. "Heaven blefs," said he, "and load with happiness, the vicegerent of its will upon earth!" "Oh! sage and equitable Haroun Alraschid, in what can the humblest of your slaves have offended, so as to deserve such extreme severity of punishment?"

"Do you know that man in chains before you there?" said the Caliph, pointing to the watchman. "He is the watchman of our quarter," replied Yemaleddin. "Do you know that plate?" continued Haroun; "Who gave it to you? Why have

have you contemptuously prostituted it, by bestowing it on the meanest of my slaves?"

"Oh! sovereign lord," replied Yemaleddin, "have but the goodness to hear me. I was in my house: I heard a knocking at the gate: I opened it myself: an old woman attending a young lady, said to me, this is my daughter; she is fainting for thirst, yet cannot prevail with herself to drink out of a water-carrier's dish. Favour her, I intreat you, with a glass of water: upon this I went in, filled a cup with water, and presented it to the woman who had spoken to me: the younger lady drank, and they went both away. I continued sitting on a sofa in the entrance into my house, in order to enjoy the fresh air, when the same woman returned with this plate of *cataifs*." "My son," said she, "the lady, whom you so obligingly served with the water, thanks you for your kindness, and begs you to accept this trifling mark of her gratitude. With this, she set down the plate upon the opposite sofa, and disappeared. Soon after, the watchman of the quarter came to make his compliments to me upon occasion of the feast of Hara-phat, and asked the usual present. I gave him some money and this plate, which I had not touched myself. This, Commander of the faithful, is the truest narrative of these things that can be given."

The Caliph heard this relation with the chagrin natural to a man so highly elevated above all others. "A woman," said he to himself, "whom I have raised from the most abject condition, gives to a man, absolutely unknown to her, an hundred *cataifs*, seasoned with gold, pistachio nuts, and sugar by my own hand—and all for

a single cup of water! She had good reason to ask the revenue of two provinces for her dowry. I sent her a token of love, a pledge of peace; and this she would have given to a water-carrier in the streets, had she not loathed his dish. Such is the esteem with which the grand-daughter of King Kaffera regards the presents which she receives from the affection of Haroun Alraschid. But, let us see how far the princess has carried her forgetfulness of me and of herself." Then, addressing the Hazeb in an altered and frightful tone;

"Yemaleddin," said he, "did you see the face of the woman to whom you gave the water?" "Yes," replied the Hazeb, in his confusion, and without considering what he said.

At this reply, which was equally false and involuntary, jealousy arising to increase the chagrin which Haroun already felt, he ordered the Persian princess to be brought forth immediately, and both her and Yemaleddin to be beheaded.

The grand-daughter of Kaffera appeared: "Madam," said the Caliph, "you went into the city, under pretence of distributing alms to the poor and unfortunate: was it to shew your face to this young man?"

The princess casting her eyes on Yemaleddin, asked, "Have you seen my face? Know you who is the author of a falsehood which is about to cost us both, our lives?" "Pardon me, Madam," replied the Hazeb; "it was I myself. My lips uttered it, without the consent of my heart or understanding. Blame the fatal influence of the stars, and our unhappy destiny, by which I have been unaccountably constrained to tell a falsehood, which my soul disavows."

This explanation had not the effect to make the Caliph retract his order for their execution. The executioner bound the eyes of the two pretended criminals; and then addressing Haroun, said, "Commander of the faithful, shall I strike?" "Strike," said the Caliph. The executioner went once or twice round the criminals *, still renewing the same question to the Caliph, and receiving the same answer. After the third time, he addressed Yemaleddin: "Have you any thing to say to the Caliph, before you die? avail yourself of the only moment that remains to you; think, that you have lost all hopes of life."

"Loose," said Yemaleddin, "this bandage from about my eyes; I would yet see my relations and friends." The Hazeb finding his eyes again uncovered, looked all around, but could see no person ready to interfere in his favour; such was the awful respect for the Caliph with which all were impressed.

A gloomy silence reigned through the whole assembly. Yemaleddin availed himself of it, and exclaimed; "I would speak to the Prince of the faithful." He was suffered to draw near: "Dispenser of favours and of punishments," said he, "suspend my punishment but for one month; and within the last three days of it, you shall see wonderful things, which it concerns you highly to know."

The Caliph was surprised at the prophetic tone in which these wonders were announced to him. His curiosity prevailing over every other passion, and as the criminals could not escape from

* Haroun made it a rule, that the executioner should turn thrice round the criminal before striking: it is easy to see his reason.

from his power, he resolved to send the princess, his wife, and Yemaleddin, to prison; promising himself to satisfy his vengeance at the end of the month, if it should appear that he had been imposed upon by a false pretence in the prophetic denunciation of Yemaleddin.

Years roll on, months fly, but days are gone with a breath. The Caliph, having been accustomed to see and hear so many extraordinary things, had become not a little credulous; and he now every moment expected the appearance of the wonders which had been so confidently announced by Yemaleddin.

Seven and twenty days had now expired, undistinguished by any extraordinary events. At last, he said to himself, "Those marvellous events will not come to seek me out in my palace; I must rather go, alone, into Bagdad, in search of them."

With this fancy of going out to ramble without attendants through the streets of his capital, the idea of the most fantastic disguise imaginable at the same time occurred to him. He put on a large, coarse turban upon his head, a buff waistcoat almost covered over by a broad leathern girdle; under this, a short robe of ordinary cloth. These pieces of dress were all of an old, worn-out appearance; and he wore, besides, on his legs, half-boots of strong, coarse leather.

He, at the same time, armed himself with a spear, took a bow and arrows in his hand; and, after disguising, with no less care, his complexion, beard, and eye-brows, left his palace in this assumed garb of an Arab from the desert. A
purse

purse containing a thousand pieces of gold hung from his girdle.

He had scarcely gone the length of two streets, when he saw a man come out from a kan *, and heard him say aloud, "How very astonishing!" He, upon this, approached the stranger, and asked, "What is it that is so astonishing?" "An old woman," replied the other, "seemingly in the most extreme poverty. From the very dawn of the morning, she reads the koran, beside the mosque, as readily, as correctly, as God dictated it to Mahomet; yet nobody gives her alms, as she does not ask; and this passes unnoticed in a country subject to the Musulman law. Can any thing be more astonishing?"

The Caliph, upon hearing this, entered the kan, and saw the old woman, sitting upon a seat of stones, and reading the koran with singular ease and correctness. She was in the last chapter. He stopped to listen, and perceived a crowd listening around her, but giving her nothing. When she had ended, she shut the book, arose, and went away.

Haroun followed, to give her alms; but, as there was a crowd between them, she had entered a merchant's shop, before he could come up with her. Curious to know who she might be, and what could be her business in the shop, as she did not seem to be in circumstances to make any purchase, he continued to follow, till he saw her enter into conversation with the master of the shop. He drew near, unperceived; lent an ear,

* Kans, or caravanserais, are large houses, or rather squares, for the entertainment of merchants, and the reception of their goods. The inns in Asia Minor are called *Konacs*. In ancient Persia were *stathmi* at regular distances on the roads. *Howel's Journal*, p. 186. *Herodotus, Terpsichore*, p. 52.

ear, and heard her say to the merchant, "Handsome young man, you are not yet settled in life; would you choose to marry a young woman of rare and singular beauty?" "Possibly I may," said the merchant. "In this case," said the woman, "you need only to follow me; I will shew you a wonder of nature."

The Caliph, upon hearing this proposal, understood it in his own way. "Ah! cursed old jade!" said he to himself, "I should have taken you for a saint; but you are only an instrument of corruption! You shall have no alms from me. Let me follow, however, and see what means she employs for the perdition of youth. I came out in search of wondrous incidents which were foretold to me; I shall, at least, see how this adventure may terminate?" He, accordingly, followed close after the pair, till at length she opened a door, led the young man in; and then shut it upon herself and him.

The curiosity of Haroun Alraschid would here have been disappointed, if the key-hole had not been very large. He looked through this, and saw, first, the merchant standing alone: instantly, however, a closet-door was opened, and out of it came the old woman, leading with her a young person of such dazzling beauty, that the Caliph was overpowered, and enchanted at the sight. Her stature was like the stem of a young tree rising by the side of a river; her black eyes, which might be compared to the fruit of the richest almond-tree in the gardens of Damascus, shed a mild lustre, like the star of the morning; her eye-brows were two aerial arches, from which the arrows of love were ready to be aimed against all who should dare to gaze on the charms

of

of her face ; her mouth was like the ring of Solomon, on which is inscribed the ineffable name ; her lips displayed a ~~vermillion~~ more vivid than that which stains the coral ; the enchanting row of her teeth was whiter than alabaster, and covered with the same enamel which glitters on the pearls of the Red-sea and the Persian gulph * : The few words which proceeded from her mouth, seemed to surpass in sweetness the honey of Palestine ; her breath embalmed the air ; two globes, white as the lily, and round and firm as pomegranates, gently heaved upon her bosom. She was indeed above all praise that even the poet of the happiest genius could bestow ; and angelic modesty heightened all her other perfections. The Caliph was captivated with the sight, and observed, with pain, that she had not linen to cover her.

When this young beauty found, that her mother was exposing her to be seen by the merchant, she was covered with confusion, which still improved her beauty : She retired hastily to conceal herself in her chamber, crying, " Ah ! Why would you expose me to the sight of that man ? God keep women both young and old from appearing before men ! "

" Be easy, child," said the mother ; " nothing is ill that ends well : A man may see for once a young woman to whom he wishes to make proposals of marriage : If their destiny unite them, all is well ; if they agree not, they see each other no more, and nothing is wrong."

When

* The coasts of the Persian Gulph are inhabited, at present, by tribes of Arabs, supposed to be the *Iscithyophagi* of ancient writers ; who are much employed in the pearl fishery.—See Niebuhr's travels, vol. II. translated by R. Heron.

When the young lady retired, the Caliph had applied his ear, instead of his eye, to the key-hole. Upon hearing the last words from the old woman, he began to think, that he had judged wrong, when he took her for a procuress. "This poor woman," said he, "has a beautiful daughter to dispose of in marriage; and no other means to procure her a husband, but by shewing her."

While the Caliph was making this reflection, the mother entered into conversation with the young merchant: "I promised you a miracle of beauty," said she; "have you been deceived? Do you like my daughter?"

"So entirely," Madam, "replied the merchant, that I desire only to know, how much you demand for the contract, and for her dowry?"—"Four thousand sequins * for the one," replied the mother, "and four thousand for the other." "Madam," replied the merchant, "were I to engage for these sums, I should be reduced to beggary: My whole fortune is only four thousand sequins. But, I offer you a thousand sequins, and as much to buy clothes for the marriage, and furniture. The remaining two thousand I must retain to carry on my trade, and support my wife. I can make no farther sacrifice."

"By the name of God which is written on our great Prophet's forehead," said the woman, "if but one of the eight thousand sequins which I ask be wanting, you shall not possess a hair of my daughter's head." "I must think myself unfortunate, then, Madam, in having been introduced to her; but, it is impossible for me to comply

* A sequin is about nine shillings Sterling.

ply with your demands." So saying, he saluted her, and retired.

No sooner was one wooer gone, than a second made his appearance; and this was no other than the Caliph himself. The fair maid whom he now saw, was more beautiful than the princess of Persia; who, according to the law, was not, even yet, his wife, and whom, besides, he had put into prison, and left her to languish there, under sentence of death, till he should see the event of the prophecy of Yemaleddin, on which depended both her fate, and the fate of that officer.

Haroun Alraschid went deliberately into the old woman's house, and saluted her. "What want you?" asked she. "I come," said the Caliph, "from the young merchant to whom you wished to dispose of your daughter in marriage. He has charged me to tell you, that you need think no more of him." "We know," said the old woman, "he was not to return."

"Well," rejoined the Caliph, "give her to me; I am ready to pay you down both the eight thousand sequins, and whatever more you may require either for furniture, or to gratify any of your whimsies. We shall not disagree upon these matters."

The old woman surveyed the Caliph from head to foot. "Robber that thou art!" then said she, "for you have the dress and appearance of a robber; do you think of plundering the caravan on its way to Mecca, in order to furnish us with eight thousand sequins, and with so much linen, clothes, and furniture? You have not even wherewith to clothe yourself. Get you gone,
you

you robber; otherwise I shall call out for assistance."

"Whether I be robber or not, Madam, that is no business of yours. I offer to pay down instantly the eight thousand sequins. I shall join a handsome present for yourself; all the furniture—"

"Do you think to make a mock of me, you robber? but justice is to be obtained at Bagdad: this is not a place for men like you to insult a poor woman with impunity. I take you at your word: if you cannot keep it, the Commander of the faithful shall condemn you to be strangled, this very evening."

"I accept these conditions, and am ready to sign them," said the Caliph: "I espouse your daughter; and you shall see me keep my promise." Upon this the old woman conducts him into her chamber. He seats himself, and says to her; "Take all proper precautions, first, to secure your daughter from me, in your absence: Go then to such a *cadi*; he lives at no great distance; tell him, that a man named *Il Bondocani* desires him to come hither instantly."

"And do you think," returned the woman, "that the *cadi* will come hither for such a man as you? If you are rich, so much the worse for you, your fortune has surely been dishonestly acquired: you are nothing but a cut-purse: and should a *cadi* come to wait upon you?" The Caliph smiled at this reply: "Go, Madam," said he, "give yourself no uneasiness; only bid the *cadi* come, and bring with him pen, ink, and paper."

At last, the old woman was persuaded to call the *cadi*. "If the judge come at the bidding of this man," said she to herself, "I may look upon

my would-be son-in-law as a Captain of robbers. But, either the *cadi* will comply with the message which I bear, or he will at least rid me of this villain." As she was musing thus, she arrived at the *cadi's* house. She was afraid of entering the apartment in which that magistrate was sitting with several of the nobles of the city. The shame of poverty, and the fear of being driven out in disgrace, held her back. "However," said she to herself, "if I go not in, I shall have come hither to no purpose. Let me at least endeavour to learn, who he is, that would be my son-in-law, if it were only to get quit of him. I may venture"—Then, advancing to the door of the apartment, she turned hastily back, fearing that an imprudent step might lead her into some unhappy embarrassment: hardly had she shewn her face in the hall, when she was seized with a panic terror which rendered her unable to go forward.

The *cadi* observed her head coming and going, appearing, and again disappearing.—He ordered one of his officers to see what that person wanted. The old woman was brought before him. "What would you have, good woman?" said the judge to her. "My Lord," replied she, "a man in my house, sent me to ask you to come to him."

"What sayest thou, impudent old woman that thou art?" answered the *cadi*: "A man send for me!" at the same time turning to his officers, he bade them bind the mad woman, and carry her to the hospital for lunatics." "Mercy!" cried the old woman, when she heard this order: "Ah! the cursed robber who sent me hither to ruin me. Did not I tell him, that he was not a man

man to fend for the *cadi*? Do not, my Lord, lay hold upon me for this. I have a thief, a robber, a hang-dog in my house, who compelled me to come upon his errand. I came, against my will: but I am a woman; I am alone: that wicked man would marry my daughter; there was no refusing him; he said that you knew him, and that his name was *Il Bondocani*. *

As soon as ever the *cadi* heard this name; “*My faragi!*” cried he hastily. “Set the woman at liberty. My good woman,” said he, “softening his tone, you say that the young man who sent you to me is called—” “My Lord,” replied the old woman, “ask me not to repeat his name; it makes my flesh shrink to think of it. He is undoubtedly some notorious rogue; the captain of a troop of robbers. But, if I must pronounce it, his name is *Il Bondocani*.”

The *cadi* now knew the fancied robber to be the Caliph in person. He wrapped himself in his *faragi*. “Madam,” said he to the old woman, “I beg a thousand pardons for the mistake which I have made, and the rudeness with which you have been treated.”

The spectators were not a little surprised at so sudden and extraordinary a change in the *cadi*’s tone and behaviour, without any other apparent cause than the influence simply of the words, *Il Bondocani*. “Where go you in such a haste, Sir?” asked they. “Upon secret business,” replied he. Then addressing himself very politely to the old woman; “Is it at your house, Madam, that

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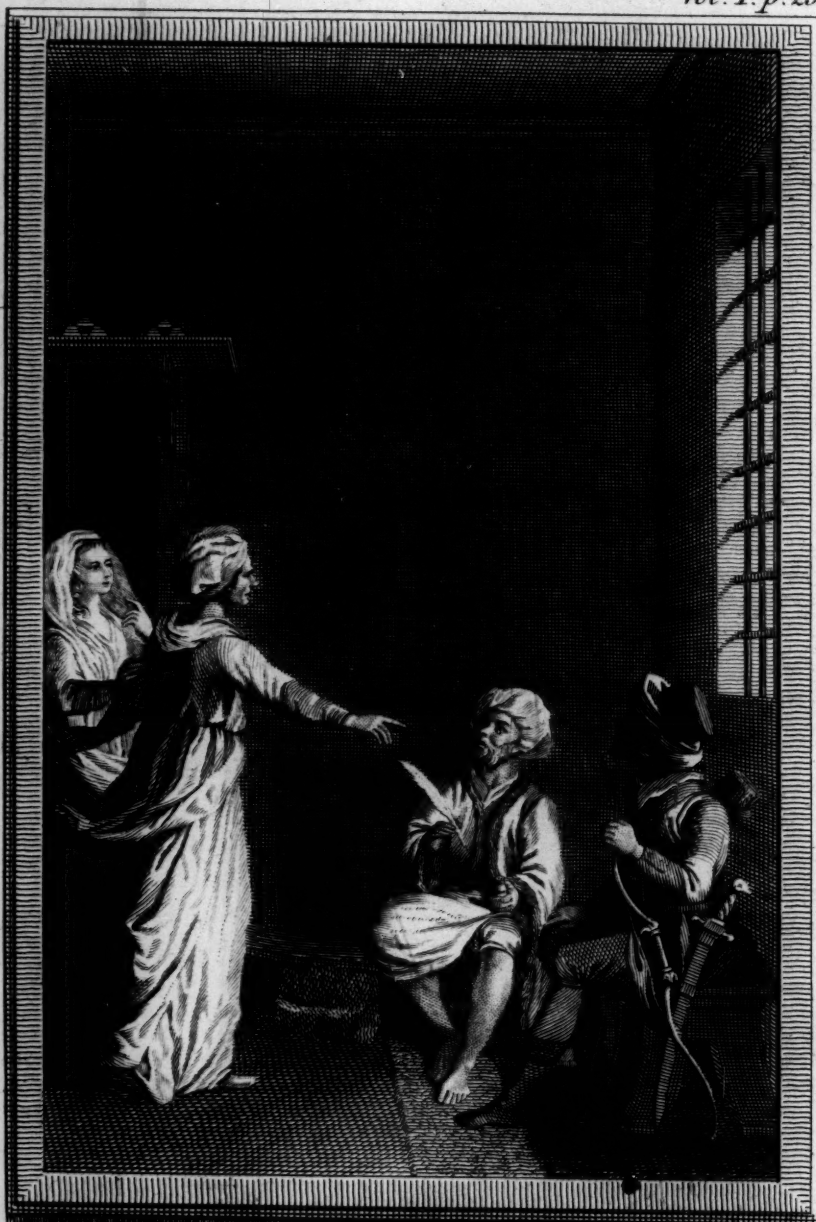
he

* This was a name which the Caliph assumed when in disguise, and was known to his principal officers.

he waits for me?" "Yes, Sir: Do me the favour of leading the way."

The old woman proceeded homeward, much more chearfully than she had come abroad; and the *cadi* followed. It was not without great difficulty and uneasiness that she had prevailed with herself to go to call the *cadi*: the bearing of such a message was enough to make her pass for a mad woman, and to occasion her being sent to the hospital for life. Now, she saw herself treated respectfully, and honoured with the name of *Madam*. "To be sure," said she to herself, "my intended son-in-law must be a man much respected by the *cadi*; or this magistrate may possibly be terrified at the name of so formidable a captain of banditti; he is in such a trepidation, that he has come out without his sandals: What a change! It is not I, now, that am to be sent to bedlam; but he deserves to be sent thither, who seems beside himself at the mere hearing of a name; runs out in his robe, with bare feet, and without knowing what he does, or says. This *cadi* must be much afraid indeed of robbers, and of my intended son-in-law more than of any other, else he would never submit to such a piece of imposition."

With these thoughts in her head, the old woman entered her home. The *cadi* entered with her; and instantly knew the Commander of the faithful. He would have prostrated himself before his sovereign: but a sign from the prince, warned him not to discover his secret. After barely saluting him, therefore, the judge sat down by *Il Bondocani*, who said, "My Lord, I propose to marry this old woman's daughter:" then the mother and the daughter came both forward;
and



*Madam, you must name the father and
grandfather of your daughter.*

and the cadi asked, whether they accepted Il Bondocani's proposals?—the daughter, in particular, whether she would have him for her husband?" They both replied, "Yes, my Lord." The cadi next demanded, how much they required for the contract and the dowry? The old woman answered, "Four thousand sequins for the one, and as many for the other." "You, Il Bondocani," said the cadi to the Caliph, "are you willing to pay these eight thousand sequins?" "Yes, my Lord," returned the Caliph; "make out the contract."

The cadi was not a little at a loss, how to obey his sovereign's command. "He had neglected to bring paper: The only expedient that remained in his power, was, to write the contract upon the tail of his faragi. After writing the first lines, which formed the preamble, he addressed the old woman; "Madam, you must name the father and grandfather of your daughter." "If the father and grandfather of my daughter were alive," returned the old woman, raising her voice, and in a piteous tone, "I should not be thus reduced to give her in marriage to a man, of whom I dare not say how unfavourably I think." "All in good time, Madam," answered the cadi; "but they are not alive, and their names are requisite here." "My daughter," said the old woman, "is named *Zutubé*, and I *Lelamain*. The rest shall, on no account, pass my lips. She is of too good a family, I assure you, for the wife of a robber."

It is easy to conceive, how much the Caliph must have been inwardly entertained with the perplexity of the cadi, the dissatisfaction of the good woman, and with the whole incidents of

this scene, which he owed to the fantastic disguise he had assumed. The contract was at last drawn out. The man of the law gravely cut off the piece upon which it was written, from the tail of his faragi, and delivered it to the young lady; but, being ashamed to appear in the street, with a robe thus curtailed, he took it off, and gave it to the old woman, begging her to dispose of it in alms to the poor. His services being no farther necessary, he, hereupon, bowed and retired.

"Certainly," said the old woman to her new-made son-in-law, "you must have played this *cadi* some fine trick or other, in the exercise of your profession. You seem to know how to make yourself feared, as a captain of banditti. That poor man hastened hither, without taking time to put on his sandals. He is gone back half-naked, leaving his faragi here, and you have paid him nothing for his trouble, nothing for the contract; he has served you, without money, and at the expence of his gown. Are all you robbers so narrow in these matters?"

"My good mother," replied the Caliph, "give yourself no concern as to the *cadi's* not being paid, or forgetting his gown. You and I have matters of more importance to settle. I must leave you for the present, that I may bring the dowry which I have stipulated to pay, and stuffs for dresses to my wife. You shall see, that I can be generous enough, upon occasion."

"And what poor man's strong-box, and warehouse," exclaimed the old woman, "are to supply means for your liberality? He must be astonished, to-morrow, to find himself robbed by he knows not whom: for I suppose that in a city
such

such as this, you gentry, do your business very quietly."

Haroun, without reply, returned to his palace; put on a dress more suitable to his dignity; sent for an architect; specified the house which he wished him to embellish, and ordered him to take with him all the necessary workmen; and, as far as possible, to transform it instantaneously into a sumptuous palace. "The grand visier," added he, "will furnish you with whatever you may want for the accomplishment of this task. The whole must be done before sun-set. You shall answer with your head for your activity in executing these orders. If the woman of the house ask, who sent you to work there? tell her, her son-in-law. If she express any anxiety to know the name or the profession of her newly-acquired relation; answer, that you know not who he is, but only, that his name is *Il Bendocani*. Let none make the slightest mention of my rank to any person; make a discreet choice of your workmen; and reflect, that your life depends upon your discretion and theirs."

The architect only answered, "I shall obey the Prince of the faithful." He immediately furnishes himself with materials. The house of old Lelamain is crowded with workmen, furniture, tapestry, stuffs: ladders are set to the walls; on all sides, within and without, are people at work. "Who sent you hither?" asks old Lelamain from the workmen; "What come you to do?" "We come to improve and embellish your house," answered they; "to line the walls with this wood of aloes, to set up these marbles, these paintings, that furniture, these curtains; all by the orders of your daughter's new-married husband."

husband." "But, how do ye call him? What are his quality and condition?" asked the old lady. "We know nothing of his quality. As to his name, we can easily satisfy you; it is *Il Bondocani*."

"I knew," said good Lelamain to herself, "that a captain of banditti could make himself formidable through all the country round. But the fear of this man seems even to have spread through the city: Not one of these people dares call a robber by his proper name. Very extraordinary, indeed!"

While she was making these reflections, a man came in, with a porter before him, bearing an iron chest, damasked with gold. "What bring you there?" said the old woman. "The dowry of the new-married lady," answered the man: "In this coffer you will find eight thousand sequins in gold, and two thousand more for your expences: here is the key."

"In good time," said Lelamain; "my son-in-law, whatever he may be, is, at least, a man of his word. But, where could he have all this? Who is he? What does he?" "I know neither who he is, nor what he does," replied the messenger; "you should know your daughter's husband better than I: I, for my part, know nothing more of him, than that he is called *Il Bondocani*."

In the mean time, the workmen had accomplished their task; and night was not yet come. Such a change had been produced upon this little house, (which, before they began their repairs, consisted of two wide rooms in a very desolate condition, and having no other furniture but two deals supported upon stones, two wooden
stools,

stools, and two mats very much worn), that it seemed now not unfit for the reception even of a prince. Lelamain surveyed, one after another, all the objects by which this alteration had been effected; and, although so unsuccessful in her former attempts, yet could she not help going again to the workmen, one by one, and saying, "You surely know who my son-in-law is, and what is his condition?" She received still the same answer; "We know that his name is Il Bondocani."

The old woman was, at last, left alone with her daughter: "Your husband," said she to the maid, "must be a very extraordinary man. He has done more in a day, than any other would attempt to accomplish in a year. None but the Caliph, or a captain of banditti, could have so many people at his command. But, while these folks pay such ready obedience to my son-in-law, they dare not avow, who he is: were his character declared, they should, no doubt, have to blush both for him and themselves. I addressed myself to the youngest of them, supposing that I might perhaps succeed with him. His answer was; "If one of us should reveal the quality of your new relation, his imprudent blabbing would cost him his life." "Undoubtedly, daughter, he is a captain of banditti, to whom you are betrothed, and the whole world are afraid of him. God and his Prophet help us!"

The architect went to inform the Caliph, that his Highness's orders were obeyed. He, and those whom he had employed, were liberally recompensed. But the house was as yet provided only with those articles of furniture which were most indispensably requisite. Haroun now ordered

dered Giafar to ornament it speedily with all those sumptuous pieces of decoration, rather than of use, which usually enrich the palaces of monarchs. Lelamain, when she saw this new profusion of luxurious splendour brought in, again sought to obtain information concerning the quality of him who sent so many fine things. "We know," said the bearers, as they placed the things in proper order, "that they are sent by your daughter's husband, whose name is Il Bondocani. We received our orders from him."

Scarcely were these gone, when a new party knocked at the door: the old woman opened, and saw them bring in a number of bales of the richest stuffs, of all sorts. When they opened the bales, and spread out the stuffs before her; "For what purpose do you open out these beautiful stuffs?" asked she. "That you may see them, Madam." "Your shewing them to me, is needless; for we are by much too poor, to purchase any thing so valuable." "Is not this the house that was repaired to-day?" asked the others. "Yes," returned Lelamain. "These are all yours, then; your newly-acquired relation sends them. Furnish your house; dress out the newly-married lady and your female friends: Your son-in-law has abundance of every thing; spare you nothing. We were ordered to tell you, that he would be here by eleven o'clock." Having said thus much, they went away.

"He will come at eleven," said she; "robbers dare not roam abroad, except at night, when all the world is asleep." As she ended this little reflexion, seeing that several things still remained
to

to be set in order, she went to ask the assistance of some of her neighbours. Great was their surprise, to see her house changed, in the course of a single day, from what it had been before, into a pompous palace. It was natural that they should be curious to know, how so great and so sudden a change had been effected. It had the air of enchantment, illusion, the vision of a dream. "All has come about naturally enough, however," said Lelamain. "This morning came a man who asked my daughter in marriage. He sent for the *cadi*; the contract was made out; and, in an instant after, by my son-in-law's orders, all the workmen in Bagdad were here, making these alterations, and bringing all that profusion of fine things, which you see."

"In this case," replied the neighbours, "he must be a prince to whom you have given your daughter, or at least the richest merchant in the empire." "We are far from having happened so fortunately," returned the old woman. "From what I have seen, I fear that my son-in-law is a robber; and, such is the terror with which he seems to have impressed all who come from him, that I cannot suppose him to be less than a captain of robbers." At this declaration, her guests were alarmed. "At least, Madam," said they, "put your son-in-law in mind, that it has been always the custom for robbers, to spare their neighbourhood." "Fear nothing," answered the old woman: "My son-in-law is surely a robber; but I cannot suppose him capable of injuring his neighbours. Be you easy; I engage, that he shall not harm you."

Her friends are thus encouraged. The men arrange the furniture; and the women assist the young

young wife to dress. Nature had, indeed, done so much for her, that she had little need of the aids of art, to render her charming; and yet, a jewel seems to acquire additional value, when employed to assist the effect of her charms. The stir within the house was interrupted anew, by a noise at the door. Those who knocked, proved to be persons bringing dishes of meat for a repast, in the highest degree sumptuous and delicate. A second service followed, consisting of the rarest and finest fruits, and the most exquisite confections. The most delicious wines, with other excellent liquors of all sorts, accompanied the other things prepared for this magnificent banquet. The vessels were all gold and porcelain. "Here, Madam," said the bearers, "is a collation for yourself and your neighbours." "You come from my son-in-law?" replied Lelamain. "But, once for all, for goodness' sake, who is he? What is his condition?" "We know no more than you," was their answer; "his name——" "Ah! his name I know better than you——No necessity for its being so often repeated to me."

These persons retired, upon this; and Lelamain's neighbours began to look one upon another, and to believe, seriously, that her son-in-law could be none other than a captain of robbers. They however sat down at table, after putting aside some of the best dishes, that the young couple might sup together when the husband should arrive. To make the most of the adventure, they took care to eat, with great appetite, of the good things which Il Bondocani had provided. After rising from their repast, they took leave of Lelamain and her daughter; congratulating

congratulating them upon the happy change in their fortune, and wishing them all manner of prosperity. The news was soon spread through all quarters of the town, that a captain of robbers from the desert, had married old Lelamain's charming daughter; the whole affair had been negotiated in one day; the house was already filled with the spoils of a dozen of caravans. Such were the reports given out.

The young merchant, to whom Lelamain had proposed her daughter, was, by this time, violently in love with her. He was piqued to think, that a robber should be preferred to him. He therefore contrived, how to ruin his rival, and regain the object of which *he* had deprived him. He determined to wait on the judge of the police, and to make a declaration before that magistrate, which he might procure to be supported by proper witnesses; and, in consequence of which, the robber would be seized and strangled, without farther process. He should, himself, in consequence of thus bringing the criminal to justice, receive a share of his confiscated effects; and moreover, in spite of the accursed old mother, the daughter would be adjudged to him, and he should enjoy the object of his passion. Such was the plan which the joint force of jealousy, love, and avarice, prompted him to form, and to execute without delay. He instantly waited upon the judge, roused his avidity by a description of the riches which the fancied robber had impudently displayed in the house of Lelamain, and began with presenting him a gratification in hand.

This magistrate, being a covetous, selfish man, took the money, listened coolly to the merchant's

report, gave himself time to reflect; and then said, with a degree of gravity becoming his magisterial importance: "Go home for the present; it is now only eight o'clock; at ten, come back; that being the hour for supper, we may then possibly surprise the robber. I shall make him be seized, fettered, and strangled. I will likewise put you in possession of the daughter, and order the bastinado to be inflicted on the old woman, as a punishment for her rejecting you, for such a rival. But, nothing of all this must transpire." The young merchant went home; and, at the hour agreed upon, returned. The judge had, in the mean time, mustered three hundred of his troops. He immediately mounted his horse, and followed the informer to the old woman's house. He met with no person on his way thither, every body being retired to prepare for rest. The habitation of old Lelamain was soon invested. The mother and her daughter were sitting quietly together, with a number of lights burning around them in golden candlesticks, and expecting the arrival of the generous robber. They heard a noise. Lelamain looked out at the window, and perceived the judge of the police, with his officers, and a numerous band of attendants.

They knocked repeatedly at the gate. The old woman would not open to them: But, the knocking became harder and louder. The person who beat so furiously, was Chamama, the worthiest officer that ever covetous and corrupt judge was blessed with. That dæmon incarnate gave out himself, that Satan was his father, and the devil Camas his brother. "Let us break up the door," cried he with fury, "since it is not opened. There is a risk of the treasures within

within escaping us. They are perhaps hiding them under ground, where we may not be able to find them: Besides, a party of superior officers may join us while we stand here, and share our booty. The door is strong, but we must instantly get levers, and raise it off the hinges, if we would not be disappointed of our object."

This activity accorded entirely with the secret inclinations of the judge. But, the officer next under him, who was named Hazen, was naturally of a mild, beneficent, and charitable disposition, and was even disposed to take the part of the unfortunate. "The advice of Chamama," said this officer to the judge, "is violent and dangerous. This house was never yet suspected for a haunt of robbers. Perhaps the young merchant has been so far blinded by passion, as to give in a false declaration. How greatly then should we endanger ourselves, by violating the retirements of women! They are under the express protection of the law; and we have to render an account of our conduct to the Prince of the faithful."

Lelamain lent an ear to this discourse. "Ah!" said she then, running back to her daughter, "What unfortunate creatures are we! The judge is come hither, to search for your robber, and seize him." "Do not open the door, mother," replied the young woman; "Perhaps, God may send us assistance, to relieve us from our perplexity." The judge, however, still continued to knock at the door: "Who are you," said the old woman, "that knock with such violence?" "It is the judge of the police," replied the detestable Chamama; "open, thou infamous old woman, who prostitutest youth, and

refetteft robbers. Knoweft thou not how much thou endangereft thyfelf by thine obftinacy?"

"Here are none but two women," replied Lelamain; "it becomes you to know and refpect the law. We neither can, nor will open to you; you come not here."

"Ah! forcerefs!" replied Chamama, foaming with rage, "open thy door; otherwife we will burft it open; and thou and thy daughter fhall both be burnt." Lelamain made no answer to thefe menaces and invectives, but returned to her daughter. "See, now," faid ſhe, "whether my fears were well-founded. Is it evident or not, now, that you are married to a robber? Heaven grant that he come not here to-night! If the judge and his officers can but lay their hands upon him, they will cut him in pieces. Ah! daughter, were your father alive, had even your brother eſcaped that miſfortune, we ſhould have made an alliance, which would not have occaſioned our door to be beſet by the judge and all his raggamuffins."

"What mean you?" ſaid the young lady: "For ſome time, you may be ſenſible, the influence of the ſtars, which predominates over human affairs, has ſingled us out, and purſued us with malignity: It is enough that we ſubmit to it: Why ſhould we voluntarily diſtreſs ourſelves with anxieties which can do us no good?"

While the judge and Chamama continued to inſiſt upon the opening of the door, and the women to lament their condition, without knowing what they ſhould do; the Caliph reſumed his arrows and half-boots, and came to conſummate his nuptials. The blaze of lights, the numbers of people about the houſe, and the noiſe which
was

was made, were together sufficient to warn him, that something extraordinary was going forward. He soon discerned, who was at the head of the troop; and saw, by his side, the young merchant to whom Lelamain had first proposed her daughter.

Chamama continued to knock at the door, and, at each blow, to utter horrid imprecations against those within. He repeated all his former reproaches, and continued to threaten the bastinado, hanging, burning, and whatever else he imagined most likely to frighten the women; calling, at the same time, for levers, to force the door.

Some of the attendants were preparing to effect their entrance in this manner. But Hazen, the lieutenant, stopped them, saying: "Do not comrades, intrude by violence into a house, in which are only two women. The alarm will be enough to kill them. Besides, how know we, whether the man we seek, be a robber, or not? We are infringing the law at the peril of our lives, and committing an act of extreme injustice."

"Pretty scruples these, for an officer of justice!" cried Chamama. "You are unfit for your place, Hazen. You trifle squeamishly about nothing, till the guilty will escape. A woman who trades in prostituting the virtue of others, and gives up her own daughter to a robber professed, has forfeited the privileges of her sex. Can you doubt the fellow's being a robber, when all the neighbours, of whom inquiry has been made, declare so?"

"Infamous Chamama!" said the Caliph to himself, when he heard this language; "thy
D 3 present

present conduct, and thine oppressive principles, shall cost thee dear : I will make a striking example of thee." So saying, he contrived how he might best get into Lelamain's house, unseen. It stood contiguous to the gardens of a large palace, the gate of which opened into one side of a street. The palace belonged to Ilamir Youmis, the first of the princes and nobility of Bagdad, a cruel, bloody-minded man. The court was illuminated with a profusion of lights. A eunuch sat in it on a marble sofa. At sight of the Caliph, the eunuch arose, and, raising his sabre, advanced to meet him. The Caliph holding out his sabre, to parry an attack, exclaimed with passion ; " Accursed negro ! is it thus that thou art ever ready to kill, without being at the pains to inquire, whether he is friend or foe, against whom thou raisest thine arm ?"

These words from the Caliph, and the sight of the sabre, made the eunuch flee in terror to his master. Youmis was surprized, and asked the cause of his trepidation. " I was at the gate of the palace," said the black ; " A man of a frightful aspect, came up to me. I went to send him away, or to strike him with my sabre, if he should refuse to be gone. He drew his sabre, spoke to me in a voice of thunder, and was raising his arm, to cleave me to the ground."

" Base coward !" answered Ilamir Youmis ; " thou hast fled from thine own shadow, perhaps ; yet I would know, who has had the presumption to threaten my slave. His life shall answer for his insolence. To insult my slave, is to attack myself." So saying, Ilamir Youmis took up a massy brazen mace, and went to find the object of the eunuch's fears.

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The Caliph, who had remained in the court, seeing Youmis approach, addressed him thus: "Youmis, Is this your house?" The chief emir no sooner heard the Caliph's voice, than his mace dropped from his hands, and he prostrated himself at his master's feet: "Commander of the Faithful! your slave is ready to receive your commands."

"Dost thou deserve to be honoured with my commands? stupid and negligent as thou art;" replied the Caliph. "Thou art chief of my emirs, and ruler in this quarter of the city; where is thy care to maintain order?" A poor woman in thy near neighbourhood is at this instant oppressed and insulted. The judge of the police and his ruffian officers are the actors in this scene of violence and injustice. For such purposes do they abuse the privileges of office. And thou art far from exerting thine authority to redress such flagrant abuses. Thou, in the mean time, drunkard that thou art! liest asleep in the arms of thy women; and leavest all to the direction of a eunuch. Thou art at best but a pitiful and cowardly wretch, to suffer thine equals to be insulted, and this at thy very gate!"

"Commander of the Faithful! I could not have the least knowledge of the disturbance your Highness mentions. Till this moment I had received no notice of it. Had the noise reached my ears, I should have treated the judge and his party agreeably to their demerits. With your permission, I go to teach them, whether it becomes them or not, to disturb the tranquillity of the city."

"Have done with this unreasonable boasting of thy zeal and courage. The house which they
have

have beset, is adjoining to the walls of thy garden. Let us cross it. Get me two ladders, by which I may enter over the walls, into the house that is besieged.

Youmis obeys. They pass through the garden. Youmis holds one ladder inclined against the wall, while the Caliph mounts it; and, with the help of the other, goes down upon the terrace of the house that contained his bride. Youmis followed. "Stop here," then said the Caliph, "till I call you." Haroun himself drew near to a window, and, looking in, saw that the architect had executed his orders respecting the decorations of the apartments with great exactness. They were brilliantly illuminated. His young wife was so richly arrayed, that her beauty appeared in his eyes still more charming than before. It dazzled with all the radiance of the sun, rising through an unclouded sky: her eyes were bathed in tears, and pearls seemed to chase each other down her cheeks. Never did the full moon shine with half that mild, yet vivid lustre, which now adorned the brow of the fair Zutulbé. The amorous Haroun Alraschid was in an ecstasy of joy and love; from which he was soon roused by an exclamation of Lelamain's.

"Daughter! they continue to knock furiously. The door will be laid in pieces. What will become of us, poor women, who have none but God to help us, in the hands of those tygers? Some devil it was, surely, that sent us this robber, whose alliance thus completes the sum of our misfortunes." "Mother," returned the daughter, "you do yourself wrong, and increase our distress needlessly, in supposing my husband

a robber. I cannot, for my part, think that he is; but I have received him, by your consent, from the hand of God; and it is my duty to submit cheerfully to the divine decree, by which I have been joined to him. Every reproach or aspersions thrown out against him, is equally injurious to me." Such words from his bride, were the sweetest music to the Caliph's ear:

"God be praised!" cried Lelamain, "since thou art content with thy lot, my poor daughter. I also see many things about him, with which I am far from displeased. Would that I were a bird, to meet him, and whisper in his ear, that he come not hither to-night. If he come, and fall into the hands of these ruffians, he is a dead man. They will cut him in pieces; and then seize every thing here. You and I, my dear daughter, shall be lambs in the jaws of the wolf."

The Caliph, in order to interrupt these complaints, took up a small stone, and aiming at the light which stood beside the mother, put it out. Lelamain lighted it again, without taking any notice of the accident. A second stone extinguished the light with which she had rekindled the former; and the good woman sought a third to rekindle this. "The wind is surely strong," said she, "or some spirit in the air diverts itself with putting out these lights." While she was speaking, a bit of gravel fell upon her hand. She uttered a cry of surprise, and looked towards the window, where she immediately saw the Caliph on the outside. "Here is your husband," said she to her daughter; "he comes by the way which all such persons are obliged to take. A thief never enters by the door. Will you now maintain

maintain against me, that he is not such? Thank God! he has for once escaped the officers of justice; and I cannot tell how happy I am!" Then speaking to himself, "Return," said she, "quickly, by the way thou camest. Here is no good for thee. Dost not thou hear the noise which is made at the door by a band of other robbers? They will give thee no quarter."

While Lelamain was anxiously making this harangue, the Caliph laid aside his boots, his cloak, and his girdle; and, wrapping them up with his bow and arrows in a parcel, sprang with the nimbleness of a bird into the apartment. He saluted the mother affectionately; and then fondly embraced the daughter, before either could have time to speak.

"Robber!" said the old woman, "is this a time for kissing and embracing, when a party are in search of thee, to take thy life? The least that it can cost thee is these two hands. Thus are persons of thy character handled by justice, even when most mercifully dealt with. Art thou not afraid of all those people?"

"No, my good mother," answered the Caliph. "I have seen many more than those in my time; and, such as you see me, I am made for noise. Heed them not. They have supped, and have had nothing so agreeable as I find here, to detain them at home. My dear wife and I must sit down to supper. Their noise will serve us for music. Give us some of your best dishes: You would make good cheer for your neighbours; and you cannot but have something nice remaining."

The old woman covered the table, saying, as she did so, "He is a perfect devil this; no more
afraid

afraid of three hundred men, than I of a mouse. After all the ill that is said of the trade, I can conceive that a woman may love a robber. They are nimble as antelopes, and bold as lions." The Caliph sat down by his bride, at the table. Le-lamain's place was opposite to them. She gazed on her son-in-law, while he ate with a good appetite, and cast his eyes, from time to time, with inexpressible fondness, on his spouse: This silent eloquence was now and then interrupted by gallant and tender expressions of his love.

"Delight of my soul!" said the enraptured Caliph, "give me but that bit from your rosy lips, which has received the perfume of your delicious breath. Ah! could I but surprise one sigh breathed for me!"

"What a deluding tongue!" muttered the old woman; "where has he stolen these honied words, to make my daughter fond to distraction of him, to-night, that she may weep out her eyes for him to-morrow?"—"You are speaking to yourself, good mother; what is it you say?"—"That you might shew more regard to me: am I so undeserving of your polite attentions?"—"I honour, I respect your wrinkles, Madam; they bespeak a venerable experience, maturity of understanding, and of years."—"Plague upon your maturity! I have seen the time when more gallant compliments were paid me."—"That I can well believe, from the resemblance which you still bear to your lovely daughter."

So saying, Haroun fondly embraced his wife. But, all of a sudden, the terrible Chamama thundered at the door: "Open! open! thou old forcerefs!" and knocked at the same time, as if his arms had been made of brass. "Fear not,

not, my dove," said the Caliph; "let us enjoy the delights of mutual love. No pleasure has so exquisite a relish as that which is attended with anxiety. Beat, knock, thunder with thy discordant voice, thou blustering Chamama! compel the tender, trembling beauty, who is frightened by thy threats, to flee, for refuge, into my arms; and her soul to escape by her lips into my heart." "Have done, thou dog of a robber!" cried the old woman: "wilt thou not escape by the window, and leave us here? The house is ready to take fire; and must thy breath kindle the blaze? As for me, I am more dead than alive."

"I will not be gone," said the Caliph; "I am too happy here. But, as it is time for us to go to bed, and as you dislike the music, let us send away the musicians. Take this ring, speak through the key-hole to the persons who are knocking, and tell them; "My daughter's husband is here, and bids me deliver this ring into the hands of the judge, who will see, by it, what it behoves him to do."

"And will your ring, think you, turn their heads, as you have turned my daughter's, with these twining arms of yours? Although the *cadi* might be in connivance with you; sure all these people cannot. But, if you succeed in this masterpiece of enchantment, as in so many others; I shall instantly put on a double belt, like yours, to give me that look of activity which becomes your profession; and beg you to teach me, as my first lesson in roguery, how to steal a woman's shoes from her feet, and come off, without detection."

"You

" You choose to be pleasant, good mother. So much the better; the fitter are you to discharge my commission. Take the ring, open the door so far as that you may put out your arm; deliver the ring to the judge, and tell him, " This is my son-in-law's ring; his name is Il Bondocani. Pronounce the name in a firm, distinct tone of voice."—" I go," said the old woman; " that name has magic in it, I know, to make men still and stupid as statues."

While Lelamain goes to deliver the ring and the message, the Caliph returns by the window to the terrace. Youmis was there in waiting for him. " Take my sabre," said the prince; " get down instantly by your ladder into the street; see, whether any one have the audacity to commit, or to order the smallest violence; whoever is guilty, strike off his head. Discover yourself as soon as you see that my ring, which I have sent out to them, has disposed the whole party to pay a due obedience to my commands. Degrade the judge; invest the Hazen with his authority. Take into custody, the judge, Chamama, and all such others of the party, as you have observed to be forward in the assault. They must be all laid in irons till to-morrow; and you will then inflict the punishment due to their demerits."

After giving these orders to Youmis, the Caliph returned to his bride; and the chief of the emirs hastened to fulfil his master's commands. He instantly went down near the tumultuous band, with his naked sabre under his gown. The old woman was, in the mean time, holding a parley with Chamama, at the door: " Cease knocking thus at the door, thou devil's whelp,"

said she, " retire for a moment ; I would speak with my Lord ; I have a ring to deliver him." " Open the door, and give me the ring, thou old sink of impurity : My Lord is on horseback ; and should he dismount for thee ?" " He must dismount," returned the old woman ; " I have a ring to give into his own hands from my son-in-law : My Lord judge will surely be able to read the inscription upon it."—" A mighty matter to read, truly ! My Lord," continued Chamama, turning to the judge, " let me cut down the door with two or three blows of this hatchet ; we may then seize that son of the gallows, with all his plunder, the old woman, and her daughter, who is as bad as herself."

" My Lord," said the Hazen, " your wisdom cannot, surely, approve of Chamama's violence. You may soon know what the ring means. We understand that the man we are in search of, is now in the house. How he came there, is hard to tell ; for it is regularly invested. It is not therefore the abode merely of a simple woman, into which we are preparing to force admission. If, after inspecting the ring, you continue in the mind to break down the door in the case of resistance, here am I ready to give the first blow. But, first, permit me to send these people a short way backwards, and to question the woman."

The judge was in a manner forced to yield to so reasonable a proposal. Chamama retired, uttering the most horrible imprecations. The Hazen approached the door. " Open, without fear," said he to the old woman, " and give me the ring : from whom do you bring it ?" " From my son-in-law," replied Lelamain, with somewhat

somewhat more confidence, in consequence of the mild words of the Hazen : " He says, that his name is Il Bondocani."

The Hazen faithfully delivered the ring to the judge, and, with it, the message, word by word. The name of Il Bondocani had no effect upon the accursed Chamama, who was not in the secret of it. " Who," said he, " is this Bondocani, who sends us this ring? He shall have an hundred bastinadoes, with his ring upon his finger, out of respect to the dignity of his name. The old woman shall be cut in pieces. I will have her burnt to cinders, to powder, and that strewed in the next brook. Open the door fully upon both sides, otherwise I will break it down with my hatchet."

" Peace! wretch," said the astonished judge. " Thine infamous, insatiable avarice, thy horrible villany, has ruined us all." His Lordship had, by this time examined the ring, and the name of Il Bondocani was well known to him. The words, *It is the Caliph*, which the magistrate uttered, were at the same time repeated from mouth to mouth through the whole party, till they reached Chamama's ear.

But, if vipers, serpents, hydras, and all the hideous animals upon earth, had hissed at once in Chamama's ears, he could not have been more terribly alarmed. He fell down, like a dead lump, upon the ground; bit the earth, and dashed his head upon it with the vehemence of despair. His awakened and agonizing conscience presents him with a frightful view of all his crimes. His whole frame is convulsed, with all the most dreadful symptoms of madness and epilepsy. " I am convinced; I am thunderstruck;

"I am dead!" cried he. In this despairing condition was he found, when persons came, by Ilamir Youmis' orders, to fetter him, and carry him into confinement in the house of that Emir. Good Lelamain had watched to see what effects the name and ring of her son-in-law might have. When she returned into the house, her uneasiness was entirely gone; but her surprize become much greater than ever.

"The word and the talisman have not failed," said she: "An awful name, this of yours! I absolutely shudder to think of it. As to the scoundrel Chamama, he has not a bowel in his belly by this time; and all the rest are petrified with fear. Sure, you must have done the officers of the police much mischief, before you could make yourself so very formidable to them. Hark! the noise is still; no lights are now to be seen in the street: They are all gone, I believe. Well! I should be pleased myself, to make people do as much for me, out of goodwill; but God keep me from ever being the object of general terror: for, we must account for all at the last."

"Yes, good mother," said the Caliph, "you must give in your account likewise; and if there be harm in loquacity, sure, you have not a little to reckon for." Then approaching his young wife; "Idol of my soul!" said he, "art thou now easy?" "Ah!" replied she, "it was only for you I trembled." "Dear, charming words!" said Haroun; "an angel engraves them on my heart; and never shall they be effaced. But, dear Zutulbé, for I have not forgotten your pretty name, tell me, is your heart now perfectly free from anxiety?"

"Not

"Not quite at ease," replied Zutulbé; "I feel a stronger emotion than fear could inspire: But, it does me no harm; I should rather, indeed, wish it to be augmented than allayed: I cannot help feeling, at the same time, a sort of slight fear—"

"The delight of my life," said the fond Caliph, "found in a fair garden, at the dawn of day." "Yes, my dear husband, I am found so." "Well! the opening rose, sparkling with all the dewy pearls of the morn, at once fears and desires to meet the radiance of the star of day. Such is my charming Zutulbé."

"And such is my robber of a son-in-law," said the old woman, having her arms crossed upon her breast, and looking kindly upon the fond pair, "who, after doing so much mischief, and impressing so great fear, every where else, comes hither to rob me of the heart of my child. God and his Prophet bless your union, such as it is; for a marriage it is, to be sure: As for me, I have nothing to do here, but to put out the lights."

Haroun Alraschid, now more in love than he had ever been in his life, undressed Zutulbé with his own hands; and the mother drew the curtains upon the fond couple. Here let us leave them, that we may see how Ilamir Youmis acquitted himself of the commission with which he was charged. The Hazen having been invested by him in the authority of the deposed judge, and mounted upon his horse, was permitted to return home, with all such of the party as had conducted themselves without any blameable degree of insolence. Chamama, the judge, and four other rascals of the same spirit as Chamama, passed the night in irons, in the court of the e-

mir's palace. Soon as it was day, the judge was sent to prison; and Chamama to the next cross-way, where he expired under the bastinado. His body was cut in pieces. His four worthy comrades, after being rudely handled in the same style, were cast into a dungeon, more dead than alive. Their crime was, *prevarication and oppression in the discharge of their employments, as officers of justice.*

These punishments had been inflicted by the time Haroun and Zutulbé opened their eyes. The Caliph arose. He naturally supposed that Youmis would have informed Giafar and Mefrour of the night's adventure, and that all was quiet at the palace. But, his affairs now rendered it necessary for himself to repair thither.

Good mother Lelamain had prepared a collation, which the young couple found very agreeable. A little desultory conversation was intermixed.

"Heaven grant," said the old woman, "that our misfortunes end here! Never were poor women more unfortunate than we; after being once rich and happy above our wishes."

"What!" said the Caliph, "if you had riches, who has taken them from you?" "Envious fortune and injustice," answered Lelamain. "And you have suffered from these in Bagdad?" returned the Caliph, with an appearance of anxiety. "Where else," answered the old woman, "since we have lived all our lives here?" "That cannot be, under the reign of Haroun Alraschid." "Was he not reigning a month ago?" "But, does not he disapprove and repress all injustice?" "Yes, yes," answered Lelamain,

main, " he punishes injustice rigidly enough in others. But, for injustice in himself, he pardons it in that quarter, unless you should suppose, that he knows not what he does." " You surprise me, good mother. Pray, let me hear how the matter stands? The delegates of his authority must have abused the trust reposed in them."

" No ;" said Lelamain, " in the present instance, no such abuse has been committed. It was he himself in person, the sage Haroun, that pattern for princes, who did all the ill. Would that he had contented himself with stripping persons of our birth and rank, of all their substance, and reducing us to the state of misery and meanness in which you found us. Had he only brought us to this condition, in which, to avoid perishing by hunger, I have been obliged to give my daughter to such a man as you ; I could have forgiven him for all this : But, to rob me cruelly of my dearest son, of a jewel, of which you have not the match, although you possess his sister Zultulbé—The bulrushes of the Nile are not straighter than he, nor the cedars of Lebanon, which are visited by the devout, more gracefully majestic in their aspect. He was mild as a lamb ; candid in his manners as a dove : The eye of the eagle was never more piercing than his judgment ; the squirrel not more active : He was Hazeb, and served the Caliph with unequalled attachment, assiduity, and zeal. It might have been thought, that the Prince loved him. But who can trust to those tigers of monarchs? He commanded his faithful servant's death, and in an instant completed both his ruin and ours. Ah ! my poor Yemaleddin !" cried the old woman here ;
" the

“ the tyrant who condemned thee to death for a glass of water, had surely drunk thirty glasses of wine more than enough.”

The Caliph, as he heard this relation, began to perceive how much he had erred. But, as he had never before received such a lesson from any person, although he had taken several to himself in the course of his life; he wished to excuse what he had done, as much as possible.

“ I have heard the affair of Hazeb Yemaled-din mentioned,” said he; “ there was something more in it than the glass of water.”——“ You mean a plate of cataifs? A fine affair, truly! My son kept too good a table of his own, to have any fancy for such trash. He knew not whence the plate came. He gave it, for whatever it might be worth, to the watchman of our ward.”——“ But,” said the Caliph, “ there was something much more serious than what you speak of. He looked upon the lady while she was drinking, and was therefore lawfully condemned to death——”

“ Don’t you go to plead here for the Caliph, and the law. Persons of your stamp have no business to understand it. My son never looked upon the woman: the poor good youth had no more malice in his heart, than a lamb. But, even if he had seen her face; he has nothing of the basilisk about him: Would his eyes have killed her? Did he know her to be another man’s wife? If all those men were to lose their eyes, who happen, by chance, to see a woman in the streets, we should meet with few but blind men.—But, she was one of the Caliph’s wives; and whoever looks upon any of them must die,” you will perhaps say. “ Why, then, does the Caliph
suffer

suffer them to run up and down the streets, if those who happen to be abroad at the same time, are ever as if a sabre were hung by a hair over their heads? Let him put a label upon the foreheads of those whom he permits to walk about; and I warrant you they shall find neither a man nor a glass of water in the way."

"But, tell me, thou robber by profession—for I cannot doubt of thy being so, since all the world say that thou art, and pursue thee, to punish thee as such—Wouldst thou be guilty of such another piece of cruelty, as that of which I accuse the Commander of the Faithful, God's vicegerent upon earth?"

"You indeed attack people for their property; but, you never kill them, unless in self-defence; their feet and their hands, you always leave them, to draw them out of the affair, the best way they can. Would you assassinate, without compassion, one who had served you faithfully?—Yet, you are not princes; you are only robbers: and I am tempted to think, that there will be an hundred robbers in paradise, for one prince; as it cannot be denied, that Haroun Alraschid is the most perfect model of a good king, upon earth."

Here honest Lelamain stopped; and it was indeed time. Haroun was confounded by the truths which she urged, and could advance nothing farther in his own defence.

"You have reason, I see, good mother," said he; "the Caliph is wrong. He has suffered himself to be hurried away by passion. All about him have been in a haste to obey the dictates of his anger. He has not found, in his whole court, one friend or counsellor, to perform the
friendly

friendly duty of staying his rash hand. He is much to be blamed, but still more to be pitied."

"Happily, there is yet no great harm done. Your son is alive. Your whole fortune has been ruined in a moment, but may be as suddenly restored. I am going out. I have some little interest in the palace, I shall use it all to serve you; and I may venture to promise, that you shall, this day, embrace your son."

"Son-in-law," replied Lelamain, "you may make us believe what you please here: But, the Caliph is not a man to run after you, without his slippers. You have not now the ring which spread so much confusion through the judge of the police's rascally troop. Don't you pretend to intermeddle in the affairs of the great Haroun Al-raschid, to whom the earth and the sea are subject; before whom the stars bow their heads, in honour to the vicar of our great Prophet. The grand vizier, Giafar, durst not undertake what you propose."

"Be you easy here, since you are let alone: change your way of life; remain with us; become an honest man: give alms: God is good, and will pardon the past: By going out, you will expose yourself to the utmost danger, and leave us here in a state of extreme anxiety. Look how tenderly the eyes of my poor Zutulbé seem to entreat you to be careful of yourself; and think with yourself, that those baubles of gold, silk and jasper, which you leave with us, will not make up to us for the loss we shall suffer in being deprived of yourself. My son is innocent; he is under the divine protection; and although I cannot love you so well as him, I am however less afraid for him than for you."

The

The Caliph was moved even to tears by this discourse of Lelamain's, so full of amiable affection, and of pious sentiments. He arose to go out; but Zutulbé and her mother held him by his gown. "In the name of God, which is written on the plate of gold that adorned the brow of the high-priest of the Jews," said they to him, "do not leave us."

Haroun, still more affected, took Lelamain by the hand, in a tender respectful manner: "O my good mother!" said he, "you have given me a treasure in the person of your amiable daughter; and you give me, what is even more valuable, in those wise instructions which I may with so much advantage apply to the regulation of my future conduct. I vow to you a warm and lasting attachment, and the sincerest gratitude, of which you shall receive the most signal proofs. But, permit me to go out; and as for my personal safety, make yourselves perfectly easy. Business of indispensable necessity calls me hence. Adieu! dear Zutulbé; you shall soon see me again." With this he left them, and returned to his palace, by a private passage, which led to his own apartment.

Immediately after his arrival, he put on his robes of state, ascended his throne, and ordered his viziers, emirs, and other officers, to be assembled before him. While each of them took his place, the Caliph sat with his head reclining on his hand.

"Cruel Caliph!" said he to himself; "thou hast heaped affliction upon an illustrious family, respectable equally for their high rank, and their important services: Thou hast almost stained thy hands with the blood of one of thy most faithful subjects:

subjects: Thou hast cast a princess, whose virtues and misfortunes should have rendered her respectable in thine eyes, to languish in a dungeon: Thou hast acted as an odious tyrant; and yet thy courtiers exalt thee to the skies. In their flattering language, thou art the Great Haroun Alraschid!"

While the Caliph was taking this painful retrospective view of his own conduct, the most illustrious of his subjects and courtiers were prostrated before him. He looked, with an air of dissatisfaction, on that deceitful homage; and thought himself rather disgraced, than honoured, by their abject adoration.

"Rise, I command you," said he. "Release the noble Hazeb Yemaleddin from prison. Array him in a rich robe, and conduct him hither. I have myself examined into the unlucky affair for which he was condemned, and have received the most satisfactory proofs of his innocence. Instead of punishment, he merits rewards; I shall this day recompense him for what he has undeservedly suffered.—You viziers who hear me, and know how ready I am to listen to the truth; tell me how it came, that you, who should have known, better than I, the fidelity of the subject against whom I had been prepossessed by appearances, did not, any of you, make the slightest attempt to clear up my mistake, and save a man of his dignity and merits?"

"O Caliph!" replied the viziers, "respect held us mute." "I hate," returned the Caliph, "that respect which conceals the truth: let it never hereafter be exercised towards me." The viziers kissed the ground, in token of their disposition to obey.

Yemaleddin

Yemaleddin was now brought in, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. Haroun descended, to invest him, with his own hands, in the richest pellice from the royal wardrobe. "God prolong your life, Sovereign of the faithful!" said the young Haze; "as he has turned your favour upon me."—"I create you," said the Caliph, "prince above all the princes of my empire, and chief of all my emirs. Go, bear consolation to your mother." Yemaleddin was eager to obey so pleasing a command.

He supposed that he was to proceed on foot, and unattended: but a horse with rich harness stood ready at the gate; and the viziers were ordered to attend in his train. Four gentlemen went before, to give Lelamain notice of her son's approach, lest the surprise might be too great, if he should appear abruptly in her presence.

While Yemaleddin went home, Giafar and Mesrou conducted the young princess of Persia to her apartment. Haroun, after the offence which he had offered her, would not venture to appear in her presence. She was his wife only by a contract, which might be torn in pieces. The Caliph's two confidants were directed to inform her, that she was restored to liberty, and might spend the rest of her days in the palace, in the character, and in the enjoyment of all the honours, of either wife or daughter to the Sovereign.

The princess of Persia, when she consented to give her hand to Haroun, had considered it as a high honour for her to become one in the number of the wives of the Commander of the faithful: but her heart had conceived no passionate

attachment to his person. She felt a secret satisfaction at the proposal now made to her. "In me," said she to the confidants of the prince, "you see the submissive, grateful, and respectful daughter of the Commander of all the faithful."

Haroun was charmed to learn that she had received his proposal in this modest manner, and immediately conceived the design of marrying his adopted daughter to him whom he had lately advanced to the highest dignity among his princes and emirs.

The mother and sister of Yemaleddin ran eagerly out to meet him. Their meeting was a scene of overpowering joy and tenderness. After embracing his mother and sister, he proceeded into their pavilion, and there sat down.

"Where am I?" said he; "our house was pillaged and razed to the ground; nor can I perceive any of its remains here, although I am on the spot on which it stood not more than a month ago. Here is a glare of splendour and opulence more than we ever possessed."

"Alas! son," replied good Lelamain, "these riches are only a proof of the extreme misery into which we are fallen: when you were torn from us, all that we had was broken or pillaged; we were left without clothes, bread, or even a bucket for water: we could not work; and I saw myself reduced to the shame of begging for your sister and myself. Yesterday came a man who offered us eight thousand sequins, if he might have Zutulbé in marriage. He was tall and handsome; but, as to rank and character, only an Arab from the desert. I suspected him not to be worth much; but we had not an ounce of bread

bread in the house. He proposed, that I should go myself to bring the cadi to draw out the contract.

“ At the first word which I spoke to the cadi, he threatened to send me to a mad-house. But of a sudden he changed his tone, shewed me the politest attention, and hastened after me, without waiting to put on his slippers. When he came, paper was wanting for the contract. He supplied the want, by writing it upon the tail of his faragi, tearing off the piece, and presenting it to Zutulbé : Nay, he even left us his gown, and went off without looking behind him. My son-in-law soon followed. Almost immediately after, the house was filled with architects, upholsterers, statuaries, painters, gilders. We had hardly room left us to turn. I asked what profession my son-in-law was of ; but not a syllable of information could I obtain from them.

“ Soon after, came a coffer, containing the dowry, with a variety of stuffs and rich furniture ; and at last a supper fit for a prince. So far all went well. But, at ten o'clock, the judge of the police came to the door, with thirty flambeaus, and a troop of three hundred men, to seize the robber, and punish us for harbouring him. He abused us with the most opprobrious language ; and his party were preparing to break open the door. In the mean time, drops our new-acquired friend, from the sky, I believe, upon the roof of the house. He came in by the window, ate, drank, joked, and made love, as if they had been singing his praises at the door. By and by, he wished to go to bed, and seemed to be weary of the noise. He accordingly gave me a ring, on which certain characters were in-

scribed, bidding me deliver it to the judge, at the door. At sight of the ring, the whole band were seized with such dismay, that they instantly made off in all confusion: and we lay down in the same tranquillity, as if nothing had happened.

“This morning, when my son-in-law arose, we began to speak of our affairs. He presumed to take part with the Caliph against us. What had an Arab from the desert, a robber—for he is so, to be sure—to do with the affair? I however brought him at last to allow that the Caliph was wrong. But, what was still more strange, he told us, as he went away, that he would speak to the Caliph for us. A most powerful protector he, no doubt! However, every thing is not absolutely ill about him. I have some hopes of his amendment. Yet I am not, for this, the less sorry for having given my daughter to an unhappy wight of a robber.”

While Yemaleddin's mother was speaking, her son continued to fall into one fit of surprise after another. A robber do such extraordinary things, openly and in Bagdad! Send for a *cadi*, and he run to him barefooted! A contract written on the tail of a *faragi*, and the monument of this piece of extravagance remaining in the house! Furnish an apartment fit for the reception of the Caliph himself! Elude the search and pursuit of three hundred officers of justice, by means of a talisman!

Here was enough to confound Wisdom herself. It appeared, however, from the steps taken by the judge of the police, against the person who had done all these wonders, that he was undoubtedly a robber. “Mother,” replied Yemaleddin,

maleddin, "the whole of your relation bears the marks at once of truth and improbability. But how could you think of giving your daughter to a robber?" "Ah! misery—nothing but the extremity of misery, could have forced me." "The rascal," replied Yemaleddin, "hath taken advantage of your situation; but, by the favour of heaven, it is now changed. I am the head of the family; while I live, my sister cannot marry without my consent. I have the law and the Caliph to side with me; and I swear by the Caaba *—

As he spoke thus, Yemaleddin put his hand to the hilt of his scymitar. The fond and timid Zutulbé trembled to see how his eyes sparkled with rage. "What a train of misfortunes!" cried the old woman; "nothing of all this would have happened, if the Caliph had done you justice but one day sooner. We should not then have disgraced ourselves by an alliance with this robber Il Bondocani." "What name is that you mention, mother?" returned Yemaleddin eagerly. "The name of my son-in-law," replied Lelamain: "Il Bondocani, Il Bondocani. Have you it now?" "And is it he, mother, who has married my sister?"—"Here, if what I have told you be not enough, read the contract; there it is. *Contract of marriage, you see, between Zutulbé, daughter to widow Lelamain, and Il Bondocani.*"

At this sight, Yemaleddin hastily prostrated himself to the ground. Lelamain burst out laughing. "So, so, my brave fellow! Thou wast to dissolve the marriage! But there thou art

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* A black stone in the temple at Mecca, which is worshipped by the Mahometans. See Niebuhr's travels.

on the ground, as well as the others ! Why dost not thou draw thy sabre now ? Oh ! gallant name, this of my son-in-law ! I am glad that it has come to my knowledge. We are expecting the caravan from Mecca : I will go along with it, and will tell the name of my son-in-law aloud ; and shall see all India, Armenia, Persia, and Romelia bow the knee before him. I will not bate a single camel. Go ; hast thou thy nose in the earth still ? Get up, my tamed lion ! put off thy slippers, tear thy gown, and do any other act of extravagance thou pleatest. Thy excuse is ready. The name which I have told thee, turns the brain of every body. Thou hast not yet seen the ring, which works no less extraordinary effects. Arise, then ! I order thee, in the name of Il Bondocani."

" Yes, mother, I will rise," said Yemaleddin, " at the name to which all on earth either pays, or at least owes, obedience and respect. I was giving thanks to the Supreme Being, for the goodness which he has vouchsafed to our family, in giving my sister in marriage to the Prince of princes, the King of kings, the sage and magnanimous Haroun Alraschid ; for your son-in-law, Il Bondocani, is no other than the Caliph himself. " Ah, wretch that I am !" cried Lelamain, " where shall I hide my head ? I loaded him with abuse upon our account." " Said you nothing but the truth ?" returned Yemaleddin ; " for, though exalted above other men, he is still a man ; and ill may be said of him." " Nothing," replied Lelamain ; " I spoke only of what had befallen ourselves." " Then," said the young man, " you may judge of the ill that he means to you, by the good he has done me.

Your

Your representation has gained me my liberty, with the title of Prince of princes, and the place of chief of the emirs. Such is the revenge which a truly great man takes upon those, who dare to tell him a severe, but useful truth."

Hardly had Yemaleddin ended speaking, when Mesroure appeared, to give notice of the Caliph's approach. The good mother would gladly have gone to hide herself. Yemaleddin and Zutulbé held her by the hands. "Come, mother," said the young prince, "honour virtue by confidence. The Caliph is no ordinary man."

Haroun entered alone, resplendent in all the pomp of rich and dignified dress. Lelamain, Yemaleddin, and Zutulbé, prostrated themselves before him. He eagerly raised them, one after another, with gracious tenderness. "Your fears on my account, have become somewhat easier," said he to Lelamain; "I assure you, that you need have none remaining: You shall always be regarded, in my eyes, as the mother of Zutulbé, who is mistress of my heart; and of Yemaleddin, who has merited my confidence. I shall ever respect you, as having given me sage advices, which opened my eyes to faults, that I am happy to have had it in my power to correct. You will pardon me, I hope, for the uneasiness which your son's disgrace must have occasioned to you. —His palace shall immediately be rebuilt in a style suitable to his new dignity: and as I wish to connect him with myself as closely as possible, I will this day give him in marriage a noble and amiable descendent of the Sovereign family of Kassera Abocheroan of Persia, who has lately become, instead of one of my wives, my daughter by adoption. As for my Zutulbé, who disdain-
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ed not to look with some degree of favour upon, and to take a tender interest in the fortune of, an Arab from the desert, to whose ruin every thing seemed to conspire; as she seemed willing to share my fortune, whatever it might be; I offer her nothing that is not unworthy of her merit, when I invite her to partake the rank and honours of Haroun Alraschid."

It is impossible to mention a better proof of the satisfaction which this discourse of the Caliph's diffused through the family, than that Lelamain lost, for a time, the use of her tongue. The Caliph had ordered a litter to be brought for her and her daughter: they went into it, and the Caliph followed them on horseback; Yemaleddin attending him on one side, and Giafar on the other. The princess of Persia was on the same day married to the new favourite. Sumptuous feasts were held, and alms liberally distributed among the people disposed, them, to sympathize in the joy which prevailed through the Imperial palace. Yemaleddin carried his wife and his mother back to his own house; but good Lelamain continued to go every day between the one and the other in a superb litter, to congratulate her children upon their good fortune; instead of reading the Koran at the door of the mosque, and asking alms from persons who were deaf to her request. If but one of those had happened to lend an ear to her, there would have been no occasion for crying out, what a wonder! The Caliph would not then have run to see the greatest of all wonders, the charming Zutubé; and Yemaleddin would have proved a false prophet.

These

These incidents afford a remarkable proof, that the stars direct the train of human events, by an influence equally strange in its operation, and imperceptible to human eyes.

Here Scheherazade stopt. "Have you done already?" said Dinarzade. "I cannot express the pleasure which I have received, from the description of the Caliph leaping in by the window, and from the rest of the story." "I am charmed," replied the fair sultana, "to understand, that one of this renowned monarch's adventures, in his younger days, has afforded you some entertainment. I shall next exhibit him to your attention, engaged in more serious cares, in an adventure in which he put his favourite minister to a very extraordinary trial; which, in my mind, shews him to no less advantage."—— Dinarzade was pleased with the hope of hearing a new story. Schahriar said, that he would hear it with pleasure; and Sheherazade began in these words.

The POWER OF DESTINY; or, Story of the Journey of Giafar to Damascus, comprehending the adventures of Chebib, and his Family.

GIAFAR, grand vizier to the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, appeared to enjoy his master's confidence and friendship. One day, however, an incident happened, which seemed to shew, that his influence had declined, to a degree sufficient to alarm all Arabia, to which the whole family of the Barmecides was deservedly dear, and especially

cially Giafar, a most accomplished prince, and the chief of the family.

It was in the month of Ramazan, when the Caliph, who religiously observed the fast, but wished to divert any disagreeable sensations which it occasioned, took the fancy of visiting the apartment in which the archives of his empire were deposited, and was attended thither by Giafar, and Mefrour the chief of his eunuchs. He ordered the vizier to open a press, containing manuscripts of the most precious character, hoping to find, among these, something or other which might afford him amusement; and ordered the Barmecide to give him the first volume on which he happened to lay his hand. It proved to be the Giaffer *, famous through all Arabia. It contains certain prognostics of future events, which, however, cannot be understood without the help of calculations. Haroun opened the book, and began to read the first pages. He suddenly burst out a-laughing; but, in a moment after, appeared to be affected with sentiments of a contrary nature. His countenance was overcast, first with sadness, and immediately with extreme sorrow; so that he shed some tears. These sentiments were again succeeded by joy. The vizier remarking these varying emotions, expressed his surprise, and his curiosity to know the motives. The Caliph suddenly returned the book into its place; and, assuming a serious and severe air, addressed Giafar in the following words, which were little expected by him.

“ Get

* A copy of this Arabic work is in the King of France's library. It is ascribed to a prince of the Barmecide race, an ancestor of the grand vizier Giafar.

“Get out of my presence; go, seek where you can, an answer to the question which you have put to me; presume not to appear in my presence, till you have obtained it; your head shall answer for your obedience.” Giafar was thunderstruck at so rigorous an order, uttered in so angry a tone. How could he have lost the favour of his master in a moment? he who, but a quarter of an hour before, had received the most flattering marks of his kindness; he, who was the companion of his amusements, no less than the president of his councils; he whom, contrary to all the usages of the East, the Caliph permitted to converse privately and familiarly with his favourite Zobeide.

The minister returned home in confusion and sorrow, and gave himself up to grief; considering his fortune as fallen, and his head in danger, since he was required to answer a question which had not been communicated to him, and to explain facts which it was impossible for him to form any idea of. Food was in vain served up before him; when the evening came, it was in vain that he sought sleep, to relieve his anxiety; his restless inquietude, his clouded countenance, and bodily indisposition, all bespoke the inward uneasiness that hung heavy on his soul. His disorder could not escape the observing eye of his affectionate wife, Fatmé. She wished to discover his secret; but although united to him by the bonds of consanguinity and friendship, as well as marriage, she could not, with all her rights to his heart and confidence, prevail with him to reveal it.

Three days had passed in this situation, equally afflicting to both, when Hichia Barmekir, father to Giafar, returning from the country, where

where he had spent some days, entered the house. Fatme communicated her uneasiness to him. Hichia, going to his son, asked the cause of his distress; and the intreaties of a parent at length prevailed. The vizier related every circumstance of what happened in the library, without hiding his own melancholy reflections upon his misfortune. The old man, whose learning equalled his experience, heard all with an air of serenity: "Be calm, my son," said he; "have I not always recommended it to you, to distrust appearances, and especially whatever the ignorant vulgar attribute to fortune? The favour of monarchs, often betrays those who think they enjoy it; it is obtained, too, by means, which seem formed to produce contrary effects. In your present situation, either I am greatly mistaken, or the disgrace into which you appear to have fallen, is to open the way by which you are to rise to more perfect happiness, and higher honours."

Fatmé, hearing him who was both her father and uncle speak thus, melted into tears of joy and tenderness. "O my respected father!" cried she, "whose prudence and sagacity are above all praise, tell us then how we may extricate ourselves from our present perplexity?" "Alas!" said Giafar, "how can my father tell what the Caliph read, when that Prince keeps it a secret from all? How can he contrive an answer to it? I saw him assume, successively, an air, first of joy, then of grief, and again of satisfaction; and I am to tell him what motives could inspire him with those varying sentiments: a thing perfectly impossible to every person else, no less than to me. "Son," replied Hichia, "the
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“ the Caliph has read a chapter of a work, famous through the whole world, of which one of our ancestors was the author : the book is the Giaffer. What made the prince laugh and weep successively, could be nothing but the nature of the events predicted. These are foreordained in the decrees of heaven ; you are to be concerned in the accomplishment of them ; and they will, of themselves, furnish the reply which is required from you. Your destiny calls you at present elsewhere ; you must leave Bagdad, and take the way to Damascus, alone, disguised, and unattended. There will you see wonders upon wonders ; and events themselves will reveal to you this secret, which so essentially concerns your peace and tranquillity.”

Giafar had the fullest confidence in the knowledge and natural sagacity of his father. He took leave of him and Fatmé ; mounted an excellent mule ; and, in a disguise which rendered it impossible that he should be known, took the way to Damascus in the utmost secrecy. There was, at this time, in that splendid and opulent city, a man, named Chebib. He was rich, affable, generous, and humane. He received, with the most liberal hospitality, all strangers, whom chance or business brought to the city. The alms daily distributed at his gate, were a certain resource to the needy. He never went abroad, but to bear relief and consolation to the afflicted. His house was the asylum of the unfortunate. The oppressed were ever sure of his countenance and support.

Without the city, he had a spacious garden, abounding in rare and delicate productions of all sorts. He permitted the nobles of Damascus

to share the use of it with himself ; and yet, without insulting their dignity, or confounding them with the populace, he found means to admit the lower classes to the participation of its beauties and conveniences ; while the traveller found there the most agreeable refreshments which hospitality could supply. To mention one striking feature of this great man's character, which may completely mark out all his worth ; he was a perfect Musulman ; neither the crowds of company that resorted to his house, nor the vast multiplicity of his affairs, could divert him from the strict performance of a single duty. By the careful management of his time, he found leisure even for study ; and yet regularly performed his five prayers a day, observed the appointed fasts, and fulfilled all the other duties prescribed by religion.

Such was Xakem-Tai-Chebib, whose distinguished virtues and generosity, flourishing at this time in Damascus, with the rich radiance of the rose, diffused abroad a favour which reached to the most distant extremities of the earth.

Chebib was in his garden without the city, when Giafar passed nearby its walls. The minister, being absorbed in deep reflection, was surprised to see himself accosted by some young slaves elegantly dressed. " My Lord," said they, " it is almost noon. The hour for dinner is near ; you are still at some distance from the city ; and your mule cannot but be fatigued. Even now, you will do well to shelter yourself for a while from the excessive heat. Lord Chebib, our master, saw you coming at a distance, and sent us to invite you to share his hospitality, for some short time, at least. He will consider it as

a favour from heaven, if he can be of any service to you, and as a piece of kind condescension on your part, if you accept his offers." So courteous an invitation to a man travelling in so simple and solitary a guise, seemed to the minister to be a prologue to the wonders foretold by his father. Besides, as he was to yield to the current of events, he could not refuse entering into an adventure which presented itself under so fair an aspect. He entered Chebib's house, therefore; and his surprise was greatly heightened, when he observed with what courtesy, what assiduous and respectful attention, he was received by the master of the house.

A large company was assembled. It was composed of the first people in Damascus. A sumptuous entertainment was served up in beautiful basons and ewers. Those presented to Giafar were of gold; and the napkin given him to wipe his hands, was richly embroidered. Chebib invited him to take the first place at the table. The whole company were surprised at such marks of attention shewn to a stranger, who had nothing extraordinary in his appearance, and who seemed to have come among them by accident. Three hundred and sixty dishes were served up on the table. The meats were all the most delicious and savoury that could be procured. Never were taste and magnificence more happily combined at an entertainment; nor was there ever a greater choice presented of wines and other liquors, such as might gratify the most fastidious palate. The atmosphere was embalmed with the most exquisite perfumes. The sweetest music charmed the ears with the greatest variety

of modulations. Poems of various sorts were recited between the different courses; and served to entertain the mind, till new delicacies should be presented to rouse the languid appetite. The princes and grandees of the city of Damascus, who were accustomed to all the refinements of luxury, could not avoid admiring the order and elegance that presided amid this sumptuous profusion; while, at the same time, they could not guess what motives induced Chebib to display them in so uncommon a degree upon the present occasion, or who might be the stranger whom he so highly honoured.

Giafar was still at a greater loss than any other of the guests, to guess at the motives upon which their entertainer acted; for he had more than one reason for thinking himself totally unknown. But Hichia Barmekir had prepared him to meet with wonders upon wonders at Damascus; and the reception which he here found, upon his way to that city, was calculated to prepare him for viewing subjects of surprise, without any extraordinary emotion.

Immediately after the repast, Chebib took his guest aside, and said to him, "You must be fatigued after your journey; if you will be pleased to rest here, you may command whatever may conduce to your convenience. If you would rather proceed to Damascus, I have a house there, in which all shall be equally at your service. If you should form any wishes which your host cannot gratify, he will offer you his own personal services, to make up for whatever may be wanting.

Giafar expressing a curiosity to see Damascus, which was entirely new to him, Chebib excused himself

himself to his other guests, attended the Barmecide prince to the city, conducted him to his house, and placed him in his own apartment, in which he had lately set up a new and most superb bed.

Such attentive hospitality, displaying such candour, such frankness, and so much confidence, was truly matter of admiration to the Barmecide prince. Every thing conspired to prepossess him in favour of his noble and generous host. Their conversation, which was at first general, soon enabled him to see, in Chebib, a mind polished by intercourse with the world, cultivated by study, and enlightened by experience; a solid judgment, and an elegant sweetness of disposition. He was, at the same time, surprised to remark, that, a man like him, in the flower of his age, and apparently possessed of so much wealth, should live alone, and without a family, as he seemed to do;—that a man, who seemed to be in every other respect a scrupulous observer of the law, should neglect that part of it which enjoins marriage, and pronounces a sort of anathema against those who voluntarily condemn themselves to die without posterity. He ventured to ask him, with much hesitation however, whether or not he was married?

“What leads you to suppose,” said Chebib, “that I am not married?” “The manner in which I am lodged,” replied the vizier; “the stillness and solitude in your palace, in which, after the coming on of night, I have, for these several days, seen no person but ourselves: beside these circumstances, your constant attention, whether to myself or others, which must naturally deprive your family of that portion of

your time which should be appropriated to them: in a word, your ordering matters so, that you and I are never separate." "Could I do less," said Chebib, "to approve myself worthy of that kindness of fortune, which honours me with such a man as you for my guest? It is proper that I should be always at hand, to attend to his wishes. I should be proud to lodge him in my heart, would he accept of the place." Giafar looked upon this as another instance of those wondrous events which his father had foretold to him;—when he saw himself, although a stranger, treated with such distinction; and every thing profusely lavished, in the house in which he was lodged, in order to render his stay in it equally convenient and agreeable. Yet, notwithstanding all that Chebib could do, to engage, to amuse, or divert his guest, he still perceived in his countenance, marks of inward chagrin and uneasiness, and could not help expressing a desire to learn the cause.

The prince, finding him worthy of his confidence, no sooner heard the question, than he opened to him all that was in his heart. "Noble Chebib!" said he, "know that your guest is the unfortunate Giafar, banished from the presence of the Commander of the faithful, his master, and deprived of all hopes of being restored to his favour, otherwise than upon a condition, which it is absolutely impossible to fulfil; yet, in which if he fail, he must infallibly lose his head."

"Although I had never before seen you, great prince," replied Chebib, "yet I knew you perfectly, the very moment I received you at my country-house. Although I have religiously kept the

the secret, yet I well knew to whom I was paying those honours. I was expecting you in my country-house at the time you arrived." "And who," replied the Barmecide, "can have given you previous information of a journey, which was no sooner thought of than begun, and prosecuted with such diligence, that it was impossible for the news of my approach to outstrip my speed?" "I must confess," replied Chebib, "that my information was obtained by extraordinary means. I have a precious book in my library, which you cannot be unacquainted with, as it is the production of one of your illustrious ancestors, and is named the Giaffer. It may be opened only at certain seasons. Information respecting future events is to be looked for in it, at the place which is first opened up. Whenever I may, I have recourse to it, for instruction. The second volume happened to fall into my hands, when I last presumed to examine this work; and the three initial letters of your name, G, B, and V, were those on which I first cast my eyes. In the subsequent leaves, I found the numbers which directed me farther with regard to those letters. These I subjected to the usual calculation of the Cabala, and thus learned that Giafar Barmecide and Vizier, was called to Damascus by a decree of fate, by which he was appointed to accomplish some important adventures, of more sorts than one; and that he was to come alone, in disguise, and at such an hour.

"In consideration, therefore, of the high respect that is due to you; grateful to heaven, by whose favour I was enabled to make this wonderful

derful discovery; and looking on myself as one of its instruments, chosen to bear a part in this extraordinary series of the incidents of your life; I removed to my country-house, and made every thing ready for your reception. The grandees of this kingdom must have been surprised to see me pay you the highest honours, at an entertainment to which they had been expressly invited; although you were introduced to them under no other character, than as an ordinary stranger, who had accidentally dropped in. But they have often seen me give the precedence at my table to a simple dervise; and, as they know how highly I honour science, you have passed, and do still pass, in their estimation, as a learned traveller. I did not open my mind to you, my prince, in the first days in which we were together; for I thought it better to wait till my conduct should merit your confidence. However, as you now know my honest regard for you; tell me, I beseech you, in the name of zeal, of friendship, of hospitality, of heaven itself, which surely has not brought us together without some extraordinary purpose; explain to me the circumstances which have engaged you in the present adventure."

"Oh! Chebib," said Giafar, "although the decree of fate which has brought me hither, had not appointed that I should have opened myself to you without reserve, yet the virtues by which you are distinguished, the friendship which you have expressed for me, and the power of sympathy, would ensure to you my fullest confidence. That book named the Giaffer, is the cause of my unaccountable disgrace, and of my journey hither." The vizier then proceeded to relate what had

had happened in the Caliph's library, by means of the Giaffer, and the strange mode that had been prescribed to him for regaining the Caliph's favour, which he seemed to have lost; mentioning, at the same time, what consolation and encouragement he had received from his father, Hichia Barmekir, and how he had been advised by him to repair straightway to Damascus.

"Dear brother," replied Chebib, "think nothing of what has happened to you: in the execution of a decree of heaven, the Caliph himself is only an instrument in the hands of a higher power. Be resigned to whatever may happen you here. We cannot erase a single line from the book of fate. We can have no merit but what consists in respectful obedience. I do not apprehend that any thing disagreeable is likely to befall you, except the uneasiness you must feel if you cannot overcome your anxiety about the issue of this adventure. Besides, you set out alone from Bagdad; you arrived at my house without meeting with any dangerous accident; you have been received with friendly hospitality; and I have been able to give you some information concerning the end of your journey to Damascus, whither you were sent by the direction of that wise prince your father. In all this, I see nothing that can greatly discourage you." This discourse of Chebib's dispelled a part of the gloom and fearful anxiety that hung upon Giafar's mind. Hitherto he had supposed that he might be the victim of some intrigue, which, by false insinuations, had deprived him of the esteem, the friendship, and the confidence of the Caliph. The reading in the library; the curiosity which
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he had expressed ; the succession of laughter and tears, the motives to which it was impossible to guess,—had all together appeared to him an abrupt and extraordinary mode by which the Caliph had chosen to signify a dissatisfaction, the cause of which he did not think proper to explain. But, after the light which had already been thrown upon the affair, and the promises made to him by his father Hichia ; and as something wondrous had begun already to appear in the opening up of the adventure,—there seemed to be ground for conjecturing, that the other marvellous things promised would soon be unfolded.

By these reflections the vizier recovered courage, and entered readily into every scheme of amusement proposed by his host. He went one day to the public baths, on another to the high mosque ; a third was spent in riding out through the city and the neighbourhood. Exquisite cheer, and whatever could improve or diversify its enjoyments ; the pleasures of select and elegant society ; and, in short, all the amusements that a great city can afford, were studiously procured by Chebib, to make his noble guest forget how heavily time moves on with those, who are devoured by the impatient expectation of an happy event, necessary to the re-establishment of their fortune.

In spite of all these varied resources for amusement, anxious uneasiness still preyed upon the mind of Giafar. Chebib observed it ; and the vizier acknowledged to him, that having been accustomed to traverse the streets of Bagdad in disguise, he felt a desire to enjoy the same recreation at Damascus. His friend made no opposition to his wishes ; and next day the vizier put
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on a garb fitted to conceal his quality, and, intimating that he should not return to dinner, entered upon his excursion through the streets and markets of the city, and passed by the mosque Giameh Illamoue (the finest mosque in Damascus, and one of the three most famous mosques in the world). Proceeding thence, he turned several corners, and found himself at last opposite to a cook's shop, which, having an appearance of neatness and plenty, induced him to enter, that he might take a meal. Among five or six other persons, whom the same desire had assembled in the same place, was one man of science, who, in the midst of a general conversation, raised his voice on a sudden, and said, in a tone of confident affirmation; "The grand vizier Giafar is undoubtedly in Damascus at this moment while I am speaking."

"How know you that?" said another person of the same company. "I am reader," answered he who had advanced the proposition, "to Abdel Melec-Ben-Mironan, our king. Five and twenty days since I opened the Giaffer, by his orders, and in his presence. You know, that this book may be opened only at two different times in the year; at the two festivals of Ramadan and Haraphat. We found, by calculation, that the Barmecide prince was to be here on the seventeenth day of Ramadan. The purpose of his coming is unknown. But you may be assured that he is here, although the king has not been able to learn where he may be concealed. A magnificent apartment is prepared for him in the palace. You cannot but know, as well as I, that the events foretold in the Giaffer infallibly come to pass."

Giafar,

Giafar, at hearing this discourse, was afraid that he might be discovered, and went hastily to the cook's room, to pay for his meal, that he might be gone. "You owe me nothing," said the cook in a low voice: "and this for three reasons; in the first place, because you are a prince of the ancient, noble, and brave tribe of the Barmecides; secondly, because you are prime minister to the Caliph Haroun Alraschid; and thirdly, because you are guest to Chebib; that Chebib, whose example teaches generosity, and is a model of hospitality worthy to be imitated by all the earth. When thunder bursts the clouds, and these fall down in plenteous rains to fertilize our lands, parched by the hot winds of the south, they only imitate the beneficence of Chebib. Be not alarmed, my prince, although he and I have happened to know of your coming hither. The mode in which our information has been obtained, is a security against our indiscretion. Here is the source of both his knowledge and mine." The cook then took a book out from a press which he opened with a key, and shewed the title of it to Giafar. It was the third volume of the Giaffer. "Here," said he, "I learned that you were this very day to dine in my house." This discourse of the cook's appeared to the vizier a farther accomplishment of what had been predicted by his father Hichia; as the series of wonders which he had been taught to expect, were now more and more unfolded.

Another incident of the same nature, was still wanting, to convince him that he had been actually conducted to Damascus by a decree, whose authority had constrained the Caliph himself to remove

move from his presence the most useful of his ministers, and to deprive himself, for a time, of the familiar society of a man in whom he delighted above all others. On a following day, the heat being then excessive, the prince of the Barmecides was tempted, in one of his excursions, to enter a confectioner's shop, in which refreshments of all sorts were sold. He sat down, and asked for some iced laxamas *. Others came in at the same time to seek the same refreshment: but the confectioner took him by the hand, and, with an air of mystery, carried him to his back-shop. "Prince," said he, as soon as they were alone, "you were not there in your proper place. Here is a separate chamber, which has been some time ready for you. Here you shall be served as well as a prince of your high birth, grand vizier of the empire, and the right arm of the Commander of the faithful, can be entertained in the house of a private person in my circumstances. Giafar went with him. The confectioner seated him upon an elevated sofa, on all sides of which stood vases of porcelain, filled with the finest flowers. Three young persons, of great beauty, and elegantly but simply dressed, waited near the sofa. "Children," said the confectioner addressing them, "this is your prince and mine, whose arrival is foretold in the books of our ancient prophets; serve him with all the attention you can, and with the respect which he well merits."

The young attendants immediately set before him a small table of sandal wood, and presented

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* Laxamas is a liquor extracted from dried raisins, and perfumed.

the laxamas with one knee upon the ground. One of them filled a box with perfumes, the odoriferous vapours of which mixed with those of the flowers, which already embalmed the apartment. It was with pleasure that Giafar saw those three young persons, of his own tribe, employing themselves about him with an air of satisfaction, and approaching him, who was their head, as if it had been to ask his protection. Thus, three young sprigs, arising from a branch of *Thamarena* *, are supported by the stem out of which they grow, while they spread out leaves and flowers, and prepare ornaments to array the young beauties of the East.

Reflection upon his own condition, and a transient emotion of regret when he looked back upon his former fortune, drew a sigh from the Barmecide prince. "Alas!" said he to himself, "when I enjoyed the favour of my sovereign, and had power to protect the whole of my tribe, how happy should I have been to have met with this charming family, whom I might have attached to myself!" After making this reflection, in which there was some feeling of bitterness, he gave fifty pieces of gold to each of his young attendants; and offered to pay nobly for the laxamas.

"You owe nothing here, prince," said the confectioner; "the house and its possessors are your humble servants. We are of your own tribe.

* *Thamarena*, a beautiful tree, the small yellow flowers of which form charming garlands, and have a delicious smell. Its leaves are dried, and reduced to powder. The ladies of the East powder their hair with it. It is odoriferous. They likewise extract from it a colouring matter, with which they stain their arms and legs.

tribe. You are our prince, our standard, the light of our eyes, the friend of the great Haroun, and the guest of the generous Chebib, in honour of whom so many lamps burn in the dome of the Coubit-il-Nassir *. Look at that famous dome; count the lamps which have been hung up there, one after another, since the first example was set by the great Haroun Alraschid himself. All who have enjoyed the favours and hospitality of Chebib, and there are princes in the number, have done themselves the honour of placing there, a signal and lasting token of their gratitude. Thus, while the moon rises to cheer the earth with mild lustre in the absence of the sun, if any eclipse deprives us of her light, if any cloud happens to hide her face, all Damascus need only to turn their eyes to Coubit-il-Nassir. The lamps which gratitude has lighted up there, will supply the absence of the luminaries of light, and incessantly illustrate the generosity of the noble Chebib."

Giafar felt a sincere satisfaction at hearing his magnificent and virtuous host so highly praised. He conceived, at the same time, that a man who could utter such a candid and generous eulogy, must be in all respects greatly above the business of a confectioner. Knowledge and virtue are not confined to any one station in life. Yet he could not help expressing some curiosity to know by what means the master of the house in which he was, could have received such particular information concerning his residence in Damascus,

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and

* A dome on the top of the hill of Damascus. This curiosity attracted the Caliph's notice, who visited it in disguise, in a journey which he had previously made for this purpose to that city.

and of the precise hour at which he was to come to take a refreshment in his house. He replied, 'That it was by studying the Giaffer, in the beginning of the fourth book; and shewed him the note which he had drawn out from his calculations. The vizier finished his excursions through the city, and returned home with an air of satisfaction, which his kind landlord was pleased to observe. He assisted the prince to put off his disguise, served him with coffee, liquors, and every thing else that was proper to refresh him after the fatigues of the day, till the hour of supper should arrive. A plentiful and elegant supper, the luxury of which was heightened by music and perfumes, crowned all the flattering attentions of Chebib: and Giafar, after eating with a better appetite than ordinary, tenderly embraced his host, and retired to rest, with a resolution of renewing his excursions through Damascus next day; hoping to discover the progress of the decrees of providence respecting himself. He passed an agreeable night; and day no sooner appeared, than he dressed himself in his usual disguise, and, after taking leave of his host till the evening, went out.

Accident carried the vizier to the banks of the river Abana. A poor fisherman had thrown his net into the river several times, without success. After three or four such attempts, which Giafar observed, the poor man, wringing his net to squeeze out the water, spoke as follows, in a tone of voice loud enough to be heard.

" I have a wife, with three boys and four girls: we have no bread; and, for these three days, my net has not taken a single fish. I address myself to thee, O my God! in the name
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of thy great Prophet; but I am far from him. I can see here the dome of Coubit-il-Nassir, which is always illuminated by the generosity of thy servant Chebib. I will yet take courage, and throw my net in the name of one who has such reputation for benevolence upon earth, and who has found favour in thy sight."

After speaking these words, the fisherman spread out his net, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and exclaimed; "In the name of the twelve most splendid lamps which burn in honour of Chebib, in the dome of Coubit-il-Nassir; in the name of Chebib, and of the twelve stars, companions of our great Prophet, which have rested over the house of that servant of God in Damascus, to honour his beneficence and generosity by their benignant aspect—In these auspicious names I throw my net. O God! may the name of him whom thou hast chosen for one of thy luminaries on the earth, be of auspicious influence to the indigent." The fisherman, as he ended this address to heaven, again repeated, in a louder voice, "In the name of Chebib!" and cast his net. It will easily be supposed, considering what friendship Giasar had conceived for Chebib, that he would wait to see how far the fisherman might be successful in consequence of casting his net in that name. It turned out extremely lucky. The weight induced the fisherman to suppose, that the meshes had been somehow intangled in the bottom of the river. But he soon saw the fishes flouncing, and was afraid that his net might be broken.

The fortunate proprietor of this valuable draught of fishes, in order to make sure of it, fixed the end of the net to the trunk of a tree

which grew on a level with the water, stripped off his clothes, and went into the river. By this means, he brought the whole draught safe land. Giafar was astonished, alike at the quantity and the quality of the fishes which it contained. He congratulated the fisherman, and lent a ready hand to assist him in emptying the net: and, as he had been surprized at seeing such a wonder accomplished by the efficacy of the name of Chebib, he asked the fisherman, who was that Chebib whose name he had so happily made use of? "Are you then, Sir, absolutely a stranger upon earth," replied the fisherman, "not to know the generous Chebib? Even the birds of passage, which have been fed out of his hand, have spread the reputation of his beneficence to every climate. He is the son of Chebib, and grandson to that Chebib who assisted the great Omar in the conquest of Damascus, and afterwards entertained the Caliph and his army for three days.

"Omar, willing to recompense his services, invited him to Damascus, built for him a noble palace, and impressed a mark with his victorious hand upon one of the pilasters at the gate, which is still to be seen, and is an object of veneration to all true Musulmans. The Caliph Haroun, when he came to visit Chebib at Damascus, honoured him in a similar manner, by impressing his hand on the opposite pilaster. Open your eyes; view those wonders which still subsist; and you will see in what manner heaven and its vicegerents have concurred to establish the glory of these great personages. The Caliph has gone still farther, and has made his name to be impressed upon the
marble

marble in letters of gold, which you may also read."

To praise Chebib, was to flatter Giafar: this concurred strongly with the present incidents, to convince him, that fate, by carrying him to be the guest of so respectable a man, was preparing the way for some happy events in the fortune of his life.

Moreover, in order to obtain still fuller assurance of the nature of that influence by which he was guided, he contrived a new expedient for trying his fortune.

While the fisherman was wringing and drying his net, he went up and spoke to him. "You have convinced me," said he, "that Chebib must be a man in favour with heaven, since you have been so successful in consequence of making use of his name. I feel some anxiety with respect to the fortune of a man with whom I am connected, and I should be glad if you would do me the favour of casting your net once again in his name."

"Brother," replied the fisherman, "it would be imprudent to presume too far upon the favour of heaven. I have been favoured with one plentiful fishing. I am at a loss to think how I shall carry home what I have caught. I must go sell them, and buy bread; for I left nothing in my house, but water for ablution; and I have no time to lose. If I throw my net without success, my family will suffer for it; and, even if I draw it out full, what should I do with more than I am able to bear?" "You shall not lose your time," said Giafar; "for I will pay you for it: neither shall you sink under your burden, for I will help you with it." "In this case," replied

replied the fisherman, "since I risk nothing, I shall take a sincere pleasure in obliging you. What name is it in which you would have me once more to try my fortune?" "It is," said Giafar, "*Gim. Bi. Ouaow.*;" (the Arabic pronunciation of the letters G. B. V. in their alphabet.)

The fisherman pronounced the name, and cast his net. It was almost immediately filled so heavily, that he could hardly hold it with both hands. The old man, overjoyed, waded into the river. Giafar helped him; and, between them, they drew out upon the sand, the largest fish that had ever been caught in the river Abana. When the fish was upon dry ground, the fisherman, putting on his clothes, softly pronounced the words *Gim. Bi. Ouaow.*, the name which he had made use of. He then asked the vizier to repeat it to him again; took up his staff, and set out, drawing figures, and making calculations upon the sand. He appeared to be in constant astonishment at the products of his calculation; and, when it was ended, returned to the prince.

"We need only to throw the net again," said he, "in the name of Haroun Alraschid, if we would exhaust the river; since I threw it first in the name of Chebib, and you persuaded me to try my fortune a second time under the star of the great prince of the Barmecides, the vizier of viziers, and the right arm of the Commander of the faithful.—And how could you seem uneasy about the fortune of the happy Giafar? how confident would you have been, if acquainted with our books! The prince of the Barmecides must be even now in Damascus, and in Chebib's house,

house, if one may judge from the effect of the conjunction of the star of the house of Chebib, with his star. If the assistance of the great Barmekir contributed to enable our great prophet to conquer Bagdad; Omar was greatly indebted to the grandfather of Chebib for his conquest of Damascus. Those two powerful stems will now perhaps join to support the permanency of the empire, as they have heretofore contributed to its extension. Such events does destiny bring about, by means which our weakness cannot comprehend."

Giafar was still more surprised to find so much knowledge, and such depth of sagacity, in one of the lowest of the people,—than he had been at the information of the cook, and the confectioner. This philosopher had no library, but the firmament; no porte-folio, but the sand. The next concern was, how to dispose of the fish that had been taken. Giafar immediately bethought him of Chebib's beneficence to every living creature. "Brother," said he to the fisherman, "you have undesignedly given me satisfaction in more ways than one. No body respects or loves the generous Chebib more than I, and none can be more deeply interested in the fate of the prince of the Barmecides. No one takes greater pleasure than I, in honouring virtue and knowledge in that class to which you belong. I wish it may shine with such lustre, as to rouse the emulation of those, who think themselves dispensed, by the circumstances of their rank and fortune, from all obligation to distinguish themselves by merit of their own. I am richer than you may suppose me to be from the quality of my dress. Let me have the satisfaction of bestowing an easy competence on your numerous family. Take these
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two hundred pieces of gold ; choose out from among the fishes, what may be acceptable to the good folks at home ; and, in the name of Chebib, restore to the river all the rest that you took in the names both of Chebib and Giafar, that they may publish the praises of that generous man, even through the regions of the deep."

"I will not keep one of them. O my prince !" cried the old man in a transport of joy ; "I know the name of Giafar, and know something of his high destiny ; and now his virtues make me acquainted with his person, and I prostrate myself at his feet. No, there shall be no miserable beings of my making in a day so happy to myself. All these fishes shall be restored to the element out of which I took them. "Go," said he to them, "take strength and courage, run through the seas from south to north, and publish, wherever you go, that Chebib and Giafar are united upon earth, where they display the perfection of every virtue ; and let the Leviathan, that prince of the demons of the deep, hear and tremble."

The vizier now took leave of the fisherman, wishing him all the prosperity that could follow a virtuous course of life, and that glory which is the just recompence of toils undertaken in the cause of humanity. In short, they parted with as much kindness as if they had been old friends. The hour for dinner was come. Giafar had taken fatiguing exercise. He went to dine with his friend the cook ; but met with nothing to gratify either his curiosity or his taste, for such wonders, as might afford him some information concerning the great work to which he was called by destiny. He went next through the market-place.

place. In one corner of the square was a coffee-house, the principal one in Damascus. Il Manachie, a small branch of the river, ran through it, and embellished the garden. He sat down upon a marble sofa in the garden; a railing of wood rose around the sofa; and, over it, hung a vine, the foliage of which was almost so thick as to conceal the seat. He had hardly taken his coffee, when three dervises happened to enter the apartment, which was close only on the side where the marble sofa stood. Giafar remarked the surprise of the three dervises, who, without being known to one another, and without any previous concert, had happened to arrive, by three separate passages, at the same place, in the same instant. They saluted each other, sat down, and kept silence for some time, while they drank their coffee. They seemed, in the mean time, to be equally curious to learn from one another, the circumstances which had produced so singular an interview. The eldest at length spoke:

“ My brethren,” said he, “ does it not seem strange to you, that accident should thus have brought us together, as if we had met here for some previously concerted purpose? do not you suspect that there is some mystery of Providence in this? Our character, which reduces us to a perfect equality as brethren of the order, suggests the propriety of our dealing frankly with one another. Let us mutually communicate the views with which we came hither. I shall begin with giving you my story, hoping that none of you will then refuse to tell his.

“ Although, at present, by the grace of God, a Musulman, I was born in the town of Kanko,
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in China, of an opulent family, who were worshippers of Hahihu. From all the religious instruction that my parents gave me, I was, upon reflexion, induced to conclude, that our ancestors had made to themselves a deity, of one or several men; and I became desirous of knowing and serving him who had made both me and them. To the perplexity which I had begun to feel upon this head, my parents soon added another, by proposing that I should marry a wife. Having been long persuaded, that a man ought not to enter into such a connection, without first knowing himself,—ought not to allow or to deny himself any enjoyment, without having examined the object; I therefore resolved to leave my father's house, and to travel through China, in search of the information of which I found myself in want.

“I easily furnished myself with gold and jewels, for the expences of my travels. I then proceeded from province to province, to learn what form of worship was observed in each, and upon what principles. Some adored idols made with their own hands; others worshipped a calf, or some such ridiculous object: All sought to persuade me, that I ought to be of their way of thinking: While I clearly perceived, that, to worship the workmanship of one's own hands, was an act of weakness; and that none but an idiot could suppose the system of the universe, organised as I saw it, to have proceeded from the head of a calf. I met with some likewise, who adored the sun, because the heat of that luminary seems to enliven all nature. I could not avoid acknowledging, that, although not God; yet he might be admitted to be a natural enough emblem of the
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Supreme Being. But being carried by my passion for travelling, to places where his influence is scarcely felt, I saw that there was something wanting, to his being even a perfect emblem. I at length returned homewards. On my way, I entered the city of Demgad. I lodged in the quarter appropriated for strangers. I entered into familiar conversation with a man, whose principles and turn of mind seemed to suit my own. Another came up in the mean time, and accosted him, "What! are you in this city?" said the former to the latter; "and where do you lodge?"—"With Tantour-Kous-Kam," answered the other, "the most respectable man in all China, for the old-fashioned virtue of hospitality. So great is his charity, that he is said to feed more than a thousand persons every day." Being a stranger in Demgad, I happened to mention to Kous-Kam, the generosity of Chebib of Damascus; and at that name, if my host could have showered pearls upon me, he would certainly have done it. It was from Chebib of Damascus that Tantour-Kous-Kam learned that generous hospitality which he exercises with so much honour to himself."

"You were well acquainted with that Chebib, then?" replied I. "I was his guest at two different times," answered he: "Without seeing the hospitality of Chebib, one can have no idea of that virtue. By his hospitality, he has gained the love and respect of all about him; and so extensive is his reputation, that the birds of heaven are said to join in concerts to his praise. I myself witnessed the affection which even the brute animals bear him, and the attention which that extraordinary man pays to them."

“One day when I was with him, an ibis flew screaming about a pavilion in his garden, in which he commonly rests for a few hours in the heat of the day. His slaves, impatient of the screaming of the bird, were preparing to shoot him. Chebib forbade. A window of the pavilion was opened, and the ibis entered; and began to scream again, more bitterly than before, over-against a large sofa upon which Chebib had usually slept. He ordered the sofa and the carpet to be carefully removed. Under them was found an enormous serpent, which had entered by a subterraneous aperture. The slaves would have killed it; but Chebib would not permit. He ordered the animal to retire into its hole: it immediately obeyed: and he contented himself with causing the hole to be closed up, and forbidding the creature to return into the pavilion.”

—I listened eagerly to this narrative, and immediately determined what I should do: “The best conduct,” said I, “can proceed only from the best principles; and virtue can be founded upon no other basis than truth: This I shall surely find with Chebib.” I set out for Damascus, and sought for the sage, whom I was so desirous of knowing. Hardly had I entered the city, when a slave came up to me, with an invitation to honour his patron’s house with my presence. I was conducted to the very man whom I wished to see; his excellent lessons made me desirous of professing myself a Musulman; and I soon after became a dervise. I now visit Damascus every three years. A taste for retirement, induces me to prefer his house in the country. At certain times my host and I meet; and I have come to see him to-day.”

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When the first and eldest of the three dervises had spoken, the second proceeded thus: "Brethren, what I am going to tell you, will prove, that nothing happens, otherwise than as destiny directs; and that it is by destiny that we have been brought together here. I am also an admirer and disciple of that Chebib, of whom you speak; and am newly arrived in Damascus, to offer myself to his hospitality. I was born in India, of a powerful and prosperous family. But being early taught to know that appearances are deceitful, and that man was sent into this world for other purposes than to pursue fancied enjoyments, which occasion more pain than pleasure; I determined to travel for my improvement, and left my father's house.

"As I was one day passing through the streets of Surat, near the grand Pagoda, a blind man caught my notice, who had asked alms unsuccessfully since the morning, and who, being now in despair of meeting with one compassionate soul, gave himself up to grief. On a sudden, prompted by the pressure of extreme want, he wept aloud, and cried out, "Whoever thou art that passest this way, give me alms, if not in the name of God, yet in the name of Chebib of Damascus." I felt myself strongly moved at that name, which I had never before heard. I was curious to know why the blind man made it his last resource. I went up to him, and after putting two pieces of gold into his hand, "Brother," said I, "What man is he whom you named?" "He is," replied the blind man, "a pattern for all who are disposed to do good to their brethren. His generosity shines so conspicuous, that all who see him, have a noble example to imitate, and
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must be inexcusable if they shut their ears and eyes against the tears and lamentations of the unfortunate. He bestows, with a degree of delicacy, which hinders the weight of the obligations conferred, from being felt by those who receive them. Such indeed is his beneficence, that not a single creature can come near him, without experiencing its effects."

"This account, given by the blind man, excited in me a curiosity to see Damascus, and to become acquainted with a man whose name and character were made known to me in so extraordinary a manner. I accordingly travelled to this great city. I obtained ready access to Chebib. I abjured before him the blind worship of Brama, Witfnou, and Rutren; and assumed the habit of a dervise.

"I shall conclude, with mentioning an incident, not unlike that of the serpent of which you told us. The king kept a lion, of enormous stature, in an iron cage, and close by one of the palace gates. Chebib never passed that animal, without giving it some mark of his kindness, and of his inclination to make every living creature happy. One day having been maltreated by his keeper, the terrible animal escaped, and was proceeding to produce the most dreadful ravages in city and country. Happening, however, to meet Chebib, the savage creature became suddenly mild at sight of his daily benefactor, and suffered him to lead him back to his cage, with as little resistance as the tamest of animals could have shewn."—The second dervise thus concluded the narrative of his adventures, asking the third to relate his story with equal frankness.

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He began, with expressing his wonder, that they should all three have come to Damaseus on account of the same man. This dervise had been born a Musulman, and had professed himself a dervise, before becoming known to Chebib; but he acknowledged himself indebted to him for much information concerning the nature and extent of the duties of man upon earth; and observed, that if Chebib set an example to the rich, of a noble and reasonable use of their wealth, he, at the same time, taught the poor to find other resources in their moderate circumstances.

"Brethren," continued he, "you have spoken of his beneficence to the inferior animals: I can tell you that it extends even to plants. Whenever he walks in his garden, he waters those which are dry, raises up such as are fallen down, and props others that may be leaning. He would never suffer water to be confined in his house or gardens, in order to make it spout up in the air, but allows it always to follow its natural current: In a word, he is the friend of all nature."

When the third dervise had ended his narrative, the first resumed the conversation: "The star of the man we are speaking of, is very powerful; but although it has almost invincibly attracted us, yet, from my knowledge, I believe that we are at this moment under the guidance of another, and still more powerful constellation. We came hither in the name of Chebib, and we are assembled here by that of G. B. V. of which I know only these letters. Books indeed prepare us, brethren; but events instruct us. Let us wait patiently for those events, which are to clear up to us the apparent mystery of our meeting here to-day."

Thus ended the conversation; and the three dervises arose, and went away. It will be readily supposed, that Giafar lost not a syllable of this dialogue. It would have been very interesting to him, even though it had been confined to the praises of his host and friend Chebib: much more was his attention raised, when he heard the eldest dervise say, that he and his brethren were assembled under a name, the star of which ruled that of Chebib, since he could have no doubt that the name was his own. The Barmecide prince did not, however, indulge, upon this occasion, any emotions of pride. He had too high an idea of virtue, to be entirely satisfied with his own excellence. The star of Chebib might be more brilliant in heaven than his. But upon earth, where it is not virtue that confers powers and honours, that of the Caliph's minister must be predominant. The vizier felt his courage raised by reflection on the wonderful accident which had brought those three dervises together, and led them into a conversation referring so directly to his particular situation. He concluded, therefore, that he had not lost the good graces of the Caliph, so entirely as he had imagined; since, in the eye of heaven, he was still vizier, as was indicated by the three letters G. B. V. which the dervise had mentioned. He returned towards the house of his host, and appeared before him with the air of having been satisfied with the different objects he had seen in the course of the day; but did not enter into a detail of an adventure, which perhaps might have pained Chebib's modesty.

Resigning himself to the influence of his star, of whose powerful energy he had received such proofs,

proofs, the vizier resolved to remain still concealed, that he might not counteract its effects by his own imprudence. And as he had received so much edification in the streets of Damascus, he resolved to continue his rambles through the city, continuing, at the same time, to disguise himself, so that he might not be known.

As he was one day returning hastily to Chebib's palace by winding streets, he found himself obliged to go a great way about. The day was excessively hot. He had supposed that he was only three or four hundred paces from the house he sought; but being unaccustomed to so fatiguing a walk, his breath suddenly failed. Observing a marble sofa conveniently enough set in a sort of portico, he threw himself down upon it for a moment, and drew out a handkerchief to wipe his face. Opposite to where he sat, stood a palace, supported upon six and twenty columns in a grand style of architecture, and illuminated by four and twenty windows. Before each window was a small terrace garden; and each garden exhibited beauties peculiar to itself. While so agreeable a spectacle attracted his eyes, one of the windows opened. A young lady appeared, seemingly about sixteen years of age, and so exquisitely beautiful, that the vizier had never seen her equal.

"To be sure," said he to himself, "it is written, that the sun and moon are to be three times eclipsed before Mahomet, the true star of the earth. Yet I am tempted to think that our writers must be mistaken. The luminaries of the world have only twice veiled themselves before our Prophet. They, no doubt, expected the birth of this heavenly object, to do her the
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homage of a third eclipse." While Giafar was musing thus passionately, the young lady continued to water the flowers, which seemed to revive at the very approach of the moisture sprinkled upon them by her beneficent hand. When that heavenly beauty had watered the flowers from a porcelain vase in her hand, she shut the window, and disappeared. The vizier waited in expectation of her coming to water the other flower-knots: but in vain: he remained with his mouth half open, his eyes fixed, and his neck stretched out towards the windows of the palace, where the lovely vision had appeared. Night found him in the same attitude, in which Alilcaf is related, in the Koran, to have remained fixed for three hundred years, after seeing the glorious bird of paradise, which announced to him the coming of Mahomet. Giafar might perhaps have passed the night there; such power had his rising passion assumed over his heart: but he was roused out of it in a short time, by the unexpected arrival of Chebib.

His generous host came out from the apartment of his women, which was divided by his gardens from the palace in which he used to entertain strangers. He had become uneasy at the prince's delay, and began to fear some accident. Disguising himself, therefore, he went out by a back-door; but the very first object that struck his eyes, was the vizier, absorbed in contemplation, opposite to the four and twenty windows. "What are you doing here, my dear friend?" said Chebib. "I was beginning to fear that you might be involved in some disagreeable adventure." "I had walked till I was extremely fatigued," replied Giafar; "and this sofa seem-

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ed to stand here so commodiously, that I could not forbear to cast myself down upon it." "Come in," returned Chebib; "here you will be more at your ease." The vizier tried to rise; but he seemed glued to the spot, as it were by some power of enchantment: his body felt excessively languid and sluggish, when he tried to remove it from a place, whence it was impossible to withdraw his soul. He endeavoured, however, to hide his confusion from his host, and accompanied him to his palace. But he could not enter into conversation; he could not partake of an excellent supper that had been prepared for him; he could not enjoy the delights of a fine evening *, which Chebib had taken all pains to improve to him. He went to rest in a state of distress, which could not but alarm his generous friend. He passed a restless night. Not a moment's sleep could he find, although he had sitten fixed like a statue upon the marble sofa; but he could not now rest for a moment, in any one situation, in his bed. The anguish of his heart affected the expression of his countenance; and when Chebib entered his chamber in the morning, he found his pulse quick, his eyes glaring, and his complexion altered. He was extremely uneasy at the sight, and instantly called his physician. The physician had great skill in

* There is nothing that can be compared with the charming nights at Damascus. The sky is free from vapours, and perfectly serene. The waters, which ran about, and through the city, diffuse a delicious coolness, which makes ample amends for the scorching heats of the day. Under the Caliphs, in the times, as the Arabian poets say, when the rivers flowed with milk, all the gardens about Damascus, and the banks of the rivers, were usually covered with singing men and singing women. It was a period of continual pleasure, and festive joy.

in his profession, of which he gave immediate proofs. He examined the state of his patient, remarked his languid respiration, and the fire in his eyes; took him by the arm, and felt his skin; and at last set himself to count the beatings of his pulse. After a quarter of an hour's observation, he asked for pen, ink, and paper; wrote down his advice, without uttering a word; and put it into Chebib's hand. The latter opened and read it, with a mixture of eagerness and fear.

"Your guest's illness is neither more nor less than a violent inflammation in his heart. It has entered by his eyes, and can be no otherwise cured, than by the object that excited it. All other remedies are useless."

Chebib gave the paper to Giafar, who read it with an air of astonishment. The generous Chebib took advantage of his surprise, and, smiling, addressed him thus: "What! my dear guest, my friend, my brother; have you a secret of this nature, and yet would not confide it to me? Was it proper that a physician should be the first to explain to me your illness? Since his art can give you no assistance, will you not deign to employ mine? Nothing that my zeal can effect, shall be wanting to the accomplishment of your happiness. Is the object of your wishes in Damascus? Where did you see her?"

"Recollect, dear Chebib," said Giafar, "the place where you found me sitting last night. A young lady, tall, graceful, handsome and beautiful as a Houri, came, while I sat there, to water the flowers in a small garden upon a terrace opposite to the sofa. Never saw I so beautiful eyes. They shed a mild lustre; and yet, the

the fire which glanced from them, irradiated the water which she sprinkled upon the flowers with all the lovely colours of the rainbow. She smiled like Aurora, when she leads in one of the fairest days of Spring. Her arms were exquisitely turned, and slightly stained with thamarina. Her beautiful hair was perfumed with powder of the same plant, which diffused a fragrance through the air, that reached me where I sat; while the charms of her features, heightened as they were by all the happiest aids that art could furnish, seemed to deserve, not merely my homage, but that of all animated nature!"—"O, my dear friend!" replied Chebib, "how fortunate do I think myself, that I have it in my power to contribute to your gratification, and to restore you that health and quiet, of which an unhappy passion might have for ever deprived you! I know the object for whom you burn; you may aspire to possess her. The beauties of her mind are not inferior to her exterior appearance: she is innocence itself. Yet the husband, to whom she is at present united, has found himself obliged, in consequence of an accidental violation of the law, to submit to the painful necessity of divorcing her, which he has this day done; and I can therefore promise her to your arms. Indulge your passion. Without taking any concern about what it may cost those who are to contribute to your gratification; be happy, my dear vizier, and assure yourself that you are soon to be much more so than you imagine. Giafar was both surprized and delighted, at this voluntary promise of his host. "I must confess," said he to Chebib, "that my father did not deceive me when he told me that at Damascus

mafcus I fhould meet with wonder upon wonder. My eyes beheld a miracle of beauty; and love has performed another miracle in my favour, by helping me to the enjoyment of that ravifhing object, through the affiftance of the tenderft friendfhip."

Chebib immediately retired, croffed his garden, and entered the fmall palace fupported by the four and twenty columns, oppofite to where the prince of the Barmecides had fallen into an ecftafy at the appearance of Negemet-il-Soupeh, the youngft, the laft married, and the moft tenderly beloved of his hoft's wives. That generous man was fully affured, after a moment's converfation with her, that it was Negemet herfelf who watered the garden while Giafar reclined on the fofa. His prefent object was, to gain her confent to a diffolution of their marriage, and to perfuade her to enter into a new nuptial engagement, much more advantageous for herfelf and her family. Her prefent fituation was not without its agreeable circumftances, nor had fhe ever experienced in it any fubjects of chagrin. Happily, he at that time fupposed, that, in purfuing his purpofe, he had no paffion to combat but his own. He was however fenfible, that delicacy and addrefs were requifite in making the propofal. It was not for him to fuggelt reafons which might perfuade a young woman, that fhe would be much happier in another fituation than in that in which fhe was prefently placed. This would come much better from an ambitious father and mother; and, when urged by them, would be lefs liable to offend her delicacy. He contented himfelf with addreffing her affectionately in thefe words: " I love you tenderly, dear Negemet, and

and feel the warmest wishes to promote your happiness. I shall perhaps give you a moment's pain, at this instant, when I have nothing in view but your fullest satisfaction: were it necessary, I would readily expose my life to serve you. In return, let me only entreat you to retire for a few weeks to the house of your respectable parents. It is in consequence of a rash vow, that I am under a necessity of subjecting myself to the pain which even a short separation from you must cost me: And, in the mean time, do me the justice to believe, that I shall be employed, when you are absent, in promoting your felicity."

Negemet-il-Soupeh having been brought up in the habit of respectful obedience to her parents, had, as yet, no will of her own. She considered this order to return to them for a few days, as a favour which she durst not have presumed to request. Instead, therefore, of making any difficulty of compliance, she innocently thanked Chebib for the permission. He had, in the mean time, sent to request Scheffander-Hassan to favour him with his presence, in order to the discussion of an affair of importance. The emir immediately waited on his son-in-law, who, without delay, explained the matter to him.

"Your daughter, my dear Scheffander, is a jewel in my eyes. But I have found means to secure for ever both your good fortune and hers, amidst all the vicissitudes to which all human affairs are subject. I counted myself happy in being your son-in-law. But a man, in all respects preferable to me, has heard the amiable Negemet very favourably spoken of, and adores her. My friendship owes the sacrifice which I offer to your-

self, to your family, and to her. Conduct her home with you; reconcile her to her good fortune. The value of the sacrifice which I make, will serve, in some sort, as a consolation to me. I should be but too happy, if I could make every other person so, even at the same price.

“But, as every thing must be conducted with due delicacy, be not precipitate upon this occasion: choose your time, and take your measures. When you have brought her to agree to what we desire, you may give me notice; and I will then divorce her before the Caliph, in such a manner as that neither you nor she shall be disobliged. Till that time, let the secret rest with yourself and your wife. I need not enlarge upon the consequences to you; one, among many, will alone be sufficient to convince you of the importance of secrecy. He who is to marry your daughter, knows not that she is at present my wife, although he knows that she is already married: And I have reasons for choosing to appear in no other light, than as the agent between the parties, who, without any sort of personal interest, wishes to render a friend an essential service.”

Scheffander carried his daughter home with him, determining to neglect nothing that might contribute to fulfil the views of Chebib, the advantages of which he clearly saw; and Giafar's host returned eagerly to cheer his guest.

“Prince,” said he, “as soon as he entered his chamber, if your physician judged rightly of the quickness of your pulse, you must by this time be in a good way of convalescence; and you may cheer yourself with the certain assurance of possessing, in a few days, the lady on whom your perfect recovery depends. Her husband desires, above all things,

things, to see the young beauty happy, whom the unlucky circumstances of his fate have obliged him to repudiate. Neither the lady's parents, or herself, will make any objections. Only one thing stands in the way of your happiness: You cannot contract the matrimonial engagement, unless in your real character."

Giafar, however much he might be in love, was sensible of the necessity of waiting till he could openly declare himself. Affected, at the same time, with a deep sense of the importance of the service which his friend had rendered him, he expressed, in the strongest language, his gratitude for the ardour and activity of Chebib's friendship. "I will take no measures," said he, "but what your wisdom shall dictate. The hopes which you give me, are enough to make me easy. I can now wait, till your generous cares, and a change of circumstances, may favour the accomplishment of my wishes." Giafar's joy was at its height. He desired to be alone, that he might muse on the object that had captivated his heart. To enjoy the solitude which he desired, he went out into the streets of Damascus, and found it every where, even in the midst of crowds. But as he was attentive to all that occurred to his observation, he happened, when near the high mosque, to overhear two blind men making their mutual salutations, they having recognised one another by the sound of their voices. "Ah! Is this you, Benphifos?" said the eldest to the youngest; "I have a great many things to tell you. My wife, you know, is from Barbary, and is skilled in all the books of occult science contained in that famous repository of the monuments of this sort of know-

ledge, the Dom-Daniel at Tunis. She does a great deal of work every day, for which we are never the richer; however she discovers many secrets. She assures me, that Giafar, prince of the Barmecides, was here, in Damascus, within these few moons. He was compelled to come hither, by a prognostic taken from the Giaffer. The Caliph requires an explanation of a particular fact; and his grand vizier has come abroad in search of this. But this is not a fit place for us to talk of these mysterious affairs."

"On the contrary," said the younger, "nobody comes this way at present; for this is not the hour of prayer." So saying, he stretched out his arm, and felt all about him with his staff; which Giafar avoided. When he thought himself sure that there were no strange ears to overhear them; "Let us sit down," said he to his comrade, "on this bench, and resume our conversation. Your wife has told you, that the grand vizier Giafar is in Damascus; and I, for my part, assure you, that, before two days are run, he will be publicly known, with whatever care he may strive to conceal himself."

"And who told you that?" said the old blind man. "My father," replied the other, "who was born in Egypt. He has not had his information from books; he is able to compose such himself; for he holds a familiar correspondence with the genies. The story which I am to tell you, is long and complex: but, have patience, and you shall hear. Markaff, one of those genies of the earth who are employed in watching over treasures, and whom my father sees almost every day, fell in love with the daughter of the Sultan of Herak, and resolved to appear to her by night, in order to try whether he could
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not please her, and persuade her to marry him. He retired to his usual abode, to prepare for making as splendid an appearance as possible before the object whose affections he desired to gain. He rose, involved in a dark mist, and was borne by a blast of whirlwind; when a cloud, descending from the middle region of the air, stopped his progress. It was the car of Tantoura, queen of the genies. She had no difficulty to know her subject, notwithstanding his finery. "Whither goest thou," says she, "so pompously arrayed? Whom dost thou mean to dazzle with this magnificence?" "Great queen!" replied Markaff, prostrating himself to the ground; "I am in love with the most beautiful object among the daughters of men, and am going to try my fortune." "She must be a fit mistress for a lover like thee. Canst thou, blinkard that thou art, discern between beauty and ugliness? The lady of thy affections is no doubt such another lump of deformity as thyself." "O my queen! the sun does indeed dazzle my sight by day; but by night I can see as well as another, and perhaps better. I can assure you, that the Sultan of Herak's daughter, with whom I am passionately in love, is the most charming princess on earth." "Mighty fine this," replied Tantoura; "and where couldst thou find expressions of praise, if thou shouldst see the lovely youth whom I am going to visit at Damascus, for the tenth time in the course of this month, without his having once perceived me?—I no sooner leave him, than I die with impatience to return. Come thou with me; thou mayest safely trust that great lubberly body of thine to the light vapours on which I am borne; they are perfect-

ly sufficient to support thee : Thou shalt agree, that thy choice is not to be compared with mine." Such was Tantoura's sovereign pleasure ; and Markaff must obey. The car of Tantoura ascended. In an instant it hovered over Damascus, and stopped upon one of the wings of Chebib's palace. It was his only son that had attracted the regard of the queen of the genies. At sight of him, Markaff was obliged to acknowledge, that there could not be a lovelier object on earth ; but maintained that the princess of Herak was as beautiful as he. They resolved to compare the two ; and if neither should then be willing to yield, it was agreed, that a third should be called in. The son of Chebib, with Tantoura and Markaff, were immediately conveyed in a cloud to the apartment of the princess of Herak. It was only midnight ; but all the officers of the palace were asleep. Tantoura, by the efficacy of enchantment, threw them into a deeper sleep, and supposed that none would be able to resist the power of the charm. But the fair Zizialé, who had been instructed by her nurse in all the secrets of the Persian Magi, and who, by her superior knowledge, was subjected to all the inconveniences with which knowledge is commonly attended, never lay down to rest, without putting her enchanted book under her pillow, and slept but with one eye : And if her right arm might fall carelessly without the bed, her enchanted rod was bound by a riband to her left hand.

“ When Markaff had formerly seen her, without supposing that he was himself observed, she had, however, perfectly discovered him : and while he imagined that he might obtain advantages over her, she had already begun to contrive
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how she might reduce him to be one among her slaves. When she saw him come in with Tantoura, she affected to be in a deep sleep; yet, at the same time, kept herself upon her guard. They put young Chebib beside her. She took him at first for some beautiful inhabitant of heaven. From the conversation of Tantoura and Markaff, however, she soon learned that the beautiful young man, who then shared her bed, had been brought thither only to be compared with her; and she became the victim of an enchanter, against whose power, the precautions she had taken could nothing avail her: this enchanter was Love.

“Tantoura and Markaff, however, grew warm in the dispute, and could not agree whether young Chebib or Zizialé were the most beautiful. At length, Tantoura determined to call in a third person, to determine between them. She stamped with her foot, and the genie Karkass appeared. He was to all appearance a sort of brute, not three feet high. He bore some resemblance to man, however; for he had half a human face remaining, although the other half was entirely destroyed. From this profile, which was furrowed with wrinkles, a beard hung down upon the ground. His chin extended to his knee. The whole back part of his body resembled one long bunch, and was supported by an ox's foot, which went and came nimbly enough, with the help of two crutches. His other foot was turned up over his shoulder. I can describe this genie. My father let me see him. He is no less crafty than ugly; and, upon occasion, is employed to devise expedients to assist the enterprises of the other genies.

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"When Karkafs appeared, Tantoura thus addressed him. "Old monster, Markaff and I are in a dispute here. We have each a favourite. There they are together. Upon the subject of beauty, none can be so disinterested as thou; for thou hast no sort of pretension to it. Look upon these two objects in that bed; and, without respect to sex, declare which of the two has the advantage over the other in beauty."

"Karkafs advanced towards the bed, displaying his hideous and cadaverous skeleton, while his half head rose six feet high. He stooped, and held his gummy eye several times near to the two charming faces; and when he thought he had examined them with sufficient attention, he stepped back into the middle of the room, resumed his former attitude, and spoke thus: "Great queen! and you Markaff! your disputes are vain. Each of these lovely creatures possesses the most perfect beauty of the sexes to which they respectively belong. They are made for one another: and as I have no doubt examined them more narrowly than you, I have seen the mark of the star by whose influence they are infallibly to be united. I know not what your views may be; but I know there is nothing to be gained by any attempt to oppose their destiny. For, as is proverbially said, 'Where fate has decided, forcery can do nothing.' Do things with a good grace; renounce your pretensions, whatever they may be; anticipate that destiny which you cannot disappoint, by accomplishing an immediate union between these two objects of your affection."

"Tantoura went up, first to young Chebib, and then to Zizialé, and perceived the mark
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which Karkafs had observed. She had on her finger two splendid rings. She put the prettiest of the two upon young Chebib's finger, and the other upon the hand of the princess of Herak; seized the right hands of both, joined them, and gave each a kiss. Markaff and Karkafs would gladly have done as much, but were restrained by respect for the queen. The young couple were no sooner united than separated; for Tantoura, dismissing the other genies, took up her charming favourite, and conveyed him immediately back to Damascus.

"The fair Zizialé, although seemingly sound asleep, had not lost a word of all that passed, and was prevailed on to avail herself of what she had heard. She saw herself destined to become the wife of the most amiable man upon earth. She already felt herself to be far from indifferent to him. She knew neither his name nor condition: But she had means in her power, for acquainting herself with both. Her soul was dissolved in that tenderness which usually accompanies the first emotions of hopeful love; and hardly had Tantoura retired, when the princess fell asleep, under the sweet influence of gentle hope, and young desire.

"She was saluted, at her awaking, by less pleasing intelligence. An ambassador was arrived at Herak from the Sultan of Curdistan; the object of whose embassy was, to demand the princess in marriage for the heir-apparent to that crown. All possible advantages concurred to recommend this connection to the Sultan of Herak; and he did not expect any objection to be made on the part of his daughter. He was therefore extremely surprised when she replied, that she could not now dispose either of her hand
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or her heart, and would rather die than marry the prince of Curdistan. This strange and unexpected reply, had at first almost provoked the Sultan to burst out in a transport of rage; but he considered that it were better to restrain himself. "Princess," said he, "you surely cannot suppose that my daughter and sole heiress is to be left to dispose of herself in marriage, entirely according to her own fancy. Your equipage is making ready; and you must set out with the ambassador who has been sent to demand you."

"Zizialé was confounded by this reply. Her mother soon after entered her apartment, and found her in tears. "What means this, daughter?" said she; "Would you deny a young and lovely prince, who brings a crown to be united with that which you will one day inherit? Why refuse him? How capricious!—Had Zizialé known her lover's name, she would have answered, without evasion, "I am in love with young Chebib." But, in the present case, while she determined to persist in the refusal, she was obliged to be silent with respect to its motives.

"Whether you like or dislike it," continued her mother, "as it is a settled affair, and you must set out in three days, let the state of your affections remain a secret to your husband's ambassador. I know not how to account for your present humour, seeing that you have hitherto so uniformly given us the highest satisfaction." Her mother went away, and Zizialé remained in no very agreeable state of mind. She could not avoid disobliging her parents, whom she tenderly loved. Such was the necessity imposed upon her by destiny and love; she could not even explain the reasons for her obstinacy. As to the preparations

preparations for her departure, and the near approach of the time fixed for her setting out; these gave her no uneasiness, farther than as they compelled her to have recourse to supernatural means, in withdrawing herself from a family, whom her elopement would throw into the most anxious distress.—And whither should she go, to find the object of her love?

“As she was anxiously musing these ideas, Markaff officiously presented himself before her: he had not yet given up his pretensions to Zizialé, so entirely as Tantoura had laid aside hers to young Chebib.

“This apparition had been always an object of horror to the princess. “What want you?” said she; “Who are you?” “I am Markaff,” replied he, “a genie who contributed to your union, last night, with a charming young man, whose ring remains with you. I am acquainted with what is going on about you; I love you; and I am come to your aid.” “He who loves me, serves me,” replied Zizialé: “Come within this circle.” With this, she marked out a circle; and Markaff, who was desperately in love, entered it. The young enchantress having more skill than he supposed, reduced him thus to such entire subjection, that he became henceforward the most devoted of her slaves. When Markaff was thus, by her magical incantations, rendered completely subservient to her will, so that he durst refuse her nothing: “You know my love,” said she to him; “bear me instantly to the gate of the city in which he lives.” The lumpish Markaff became an eagle, to obey the pleasure of her whom he loved: She might even have made a butterfly of him.

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“ He set her down in the evening, in a garden, at the entrance into the suburbs of Damascus. Her features remained the same; but she disguised her sex, darkened her complexion, and, accoutring herself with a bow and arrows, presented herself at the door of a house as a young Arab from the desert, and asked lodging till the city gates should be opened. She was kindly received, and shewn to a corner where she might rest for the night, after having been first entertained with such refreshments as the good people could afford. The only inhabitants of the house, were a man and woman, with their daughter, who was fourteen years of age, and very pretty, and therefore carefully concealed from the sight of their guest. Zizialé slept quietly through the night, her anxiety having kept her awake on the two preceding nights. It might have been late in the day before she had awaked: but she was disturbed by a great noise at the door of the place where she slept; and when it was opened, was saluted with a cry of, “ Here is the ravisher !” uttered by a woman whose hair was dishevelled, and who pointed at her with her finger. Before she could get up, she found herself in the hands of the officers of justice.

“ She was carried before the cadi, from whom she heard, that she had been guilty of an unpardonable crime, in attempting the honour of a virgin, whose father and mother had given her so humane a reception. The supposed criminal might easily have evinced her innocence; but then she must have betrayed a secret which she had resolved to conceal; and she expected to extricate herself out of her present difficulties, by means of her book, her rod, and Markaff.

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"At the imputation urged against her, she cast her eyes upon the ground, and remained silent. Her silence was interpreted as a tacit acknowledgment of her guilt. She was ordered to prison, till her sentence should be pronounced in due form; and suffered herself to be conducted thither, without offering the least resistance or complaint. But, no sooner had the jailor left her in confinement, than she called on Markaff. Her faithful slave stood before her. "Extricate me out of this affair," said she. "What you require, is no easy matter," replied the genie: "In your present situation, neither your rod, nor mine, can be of any service.—Yet there are other means.

"I know what is laid to your charge. A spirit of the air has named the criminal to me. He entered by night into the house (with which he was better acquainted than you) with the help of a ladder, which assisted him likewise in his escape. He met with resistance, and had his nose bitten off, and his face torn; nor has he yet removed his ladder. I will go in pursuit of him; and, if you are, in the mean time, led out to punishment, shall easily find means to oblige him to come and take your place. But, I have not a moment to lose. I go, to embitter the remorse which already tortures his heart." Markaff left her. Zizialé made herself easy, and turned her thoughts again upon the object of her love. Scarcely had her slave been a moment absent, when she saw him return. "I have met with our queen Tantoura. Things are assuming a new aspect. From her I have learned, that you are brought hither by Destiny. You must be led out to the foot of the scaffold. She will follow you thither, unseen,

and tell you what you shall do. At present, we are all three blindly impelled by an higher power; but you need be under no uneasiness."

"The princess of Herak, having a natural firmness of mind, and being thus encouraged by the protection of the queen of the genies, submitted, with calm resignation, to what Markaff declared to be the determination of Fate."

The younger of the two blind men here ended his narrative. "We shall know to-morrow, brother," continued he, still speaking to the old man, "how this affair is to end; and, if Markaff does not deceive my father, we may expect something very extraordinary." Thus ended the conversation between the two blind men; and they parted.

Long as their conversation had been, Giafar had not lost a syllable of it. What did not concern himself, related however to his friend Chebib, and that too nearly, for it to be indifferent to him. The singular situation of Zirzialé, the victim of love and fate; exposed, without any criminality of her own, to shame, and the chance of punishment, awaked in his breast sentiments of benevolence and justice; while his curiosity was excited, by so confident a promise of wonders to happen on the next day. He resolved, therefore, to repair, in as complete a disguise as possible, to the place where the maid, who was so fondly in love with his host's son, was to be led out to punishment.

He returned to Chebib's house, but said nothing to him of the discoveries which he had made in the course of the day. His host had not hitherto mentioned to him any thing of his having a son of such high hopes. He would not pry

pry into what had been kept secret ; but waited patiently, till time might induce Chebib to open his mind upon the subject of his son.

The two friends spent this evening no less agreeably together, than the preceding evenings. Giafar was the gayest of the two. Chebib seemed absent, at times. The vizier, enamoured as he was, and anxious, from the very nature of his passion for the fair florist, was struck with a sudden fear, that some obstacle might have arisen in the way of his love ; and mentioned his apprehensions to his friend ; who told him, that, on that head, he might make himself perfectly easy.

“ No,” said Chebib, “ my dear friend, no obstacle can arise to retard your happiness : That which gives me some uneasiness at present, is a concern entirely peculiar to myself. Fate, you see from your own case, spares no one. When Giafar becomes its sport, Chebib may well be alarmed. I have met with one instance of its power in my own family, and that not a little extraordinary. I need not mention it more particularly to you now ; as every thing may be gone before to-morrow. Let us make ourselves easy, my friend : we are only so many chess-men, moved by a superior hand. Let us wait with patience, and, in the mean time, do what good is in our power, till another move be made by him who directs the game.” After speaking thus, Chebib recovered his former tranquillity ; and the two friends retired to rest.

Day no sooner appeared, than Giafar prepared to set out in search of the adventure which the two blind men had made him so curious to know farther. He disguised himself so effectually, that

even his most intimate acquaintance could not have discovered him; and went to find the place of the execution, to choose a situation where he might have the best opportunity of seeing it. He went into the next tavern, took some refreshment, and then placed himself upon a tree, which was not far distant from the stake to which the criminal was tied, and overlooked it. He was now in the most agreeable situation that a curious person could choose; and nothing could escape him. Three beggars soon came to take their stand upon other branches of the same tree. He secretly rejoiced to see himself accidentally associated with so odd a party: and, at the same time, reflecting upon his love; "As I am at present situated," said he, "were Chebib and my pretty female gardener to see me, and he to say to her, 'Yonder is your lover among the persons on that tree,' she certainly would not be greatly flattered with her lot. I scarcely think I was ever more happily disguised before." While the vizier was engaged in these reflections, the supposed criminal was brought slowly forward by the officers of justice, to the place of punishment. No sooner was she at the foot of the scaffold, than she raised her hands to heaven, and turned her face towards the tree upon which the vizier stood: "O Giafar!" said she, "prince of the Barmecides, power above all powers on earth except the Caliph! I know that you are here, and that you see me. Since it has been made known to you that I am innocent, preserve me from a premature death, and a disgraceful punishment. It is vain for you to conceal yourself in Damascus: within a short time you must be publicly known. Seize the opportunity which
this

this moment offers, of declaring yourself, by an act of beneficence worthy of your character."

All eyes were immediately turned towards the tree. But as the three beggars, seated beside Giafar, were well known, he was supposed to be only a companion of theirs. However, the address to his name at that particular time, afforded the judge a pretence for putting off the execution. It was known that Abdelmelec-Ben-Merouan, king of Damascus, was then in anxiety about the grand vizier's arrival in his dominions, and the obstinacy with which he persisted in concealing himself; and had accordingly directed a search to be every where made for him. It was supposed that the young criminal might give his Majesty some information concerning the vizier; and Zizialé was therefore immediately conducted into the royal presence.

"Who told you, that prince Giafar was in Damascus?"—"I saw him, Sire," said she, "and spoke to him. He was upon a tree that stood opposite to me, in company with three beggars. I know him very well; and if your Majesty will appoint a public festival, to begin three days hence, I will point him out to your Majesty, be he disguised how he may." The king of Damascus sent Zizialé back to prison, and gave orders that the festival should be announced by the public crier.

["Sire," said Scheherazade, here for a moment interrupting her narrative, and addressing Schahriar; "It seems extraordinary, that the vizier should not even have been suspected of being the guest of Chebib, who received into his house all strangers of distinction that arrived in Damascus. But then, it is to be observed, that

all the principal personages in the state had witnessed the reception which Chebib had given in his country-house to a stranger, whom he loaded with all sorts of honours; and persons who wish to be concealed, never permit themselves to be treated in that manner. The magnificent and generous Chebib honoured virtue, still more than greatness. He was ready to offer due honours to a prince, but still more disposed to honour a philosopher. He had lodged Giafar in his own apartment; a circumstance which made the vizier to be taken for some skilful astrologer, with whom he spent his nights in studying the conjunction of the planets.”]

It is now time to return to Giafar, whom we left upon the tree. When he heard Zizialé address him, he was a good deal embarrassed. But, although all eyes were turned to that quarter, he saw none advance towards the situation where he was placed: he observed only, that the execution of the sentence had been suspended, upon his being named; and observed what way the criminal had been led, who had called upon him with such success at so critical a moment.

He supposed that Zizialé, who had such good information from the queen of the genies, was gone to assure the king of Damascus, that she had actually addressed the grand vizier, and that he was then upon a tree opposite to the scaffold. There was no time for him to hesitate about retiring from the place where he had been discovered. He returned hastily by back passages to Chebib’s palace.

Upon entering the house, he related the adventure to his host, but without hinting that he knew any thing of the young criminal by whom
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he had been brought into such an embarrassment; and concluded with saying, that he saw, with regret, that it would be impossible for him to remain longer unknown.

"My friend," replied Chebib, "you may consider it as a very extraordinary matter that you have remained here unknown for these two months. You cannot but be surprised, that the astonishment which your absence has occasioned in Bagdad, has not yet reached Damascus; and that Abdelmelec, the most restless and suspicious man upon earth, has not yet detected you by his spies; especially as he has so many of these ever on the watch in this city; and as your concealing yourself must unavoidably give more uneasiness to him than to any one else. We must agree, that it is fate that conceals you from being discovered by the king, in order to the accomplishment of some purposes that are as yet unknown to both you and me. Let us wait, till that hand, which hath so closely spread the veil, shall remove it.

"If there be one happy man, it is he who submits himself to the direction of fate, and waits, without diffidence, for the gradual development of events. You have not yet had reason to repent of your curiosity; still obey that inclination of your mind, which disposes you to look after, and listen to every thing here. You may thus learn many things that may prove useful to yourself and the Caliph, which it is not in my power to communicate: And if the mask should suddenly drop, you can make such use of it, as shall be infallibly suggested by the respect and attention with which you will be treated."

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"My fortune is truly extraordinary," said Giafar. "Not more so," answered Chebib, "than the fortune of any other man; we are all persecuted by the malice of our stars at some one time or other, during our continuance here below. I must appear to you very happy; and I am so in reality, in the possession of such a friend as you,—and in knowing myself to be the instrument chosen by heaven, to sooth, in some degree, the bitterness of the momentary trial to which you are subjected. But, can you suppose that I have not likewise my own subjects of uneasiness?"

"I have an only son, sixteen years of age. I love him as dearly as it is possible for a father to love a child: And, hitherto, I have had every reason to congratulate myself on the prospect of being succeeded by such an heir. I have kept him in the country, at a distance from his mother and my other wives, lest their fondness might spoil him. He is much inclined to study, and manly exercises, which he pursues under the direction of an enlightened governor. I hoped to have surprised you, before your departure, by presenting him to you, and begging you to carry him with you as a representative of myself. But, I had first one small precaution to take.

"I have an intimate friend who has a charming daughter; and we had agreed to marry the young couple in presence of the cadi, immediately before my son's departure. He should have passed a year or two with you; and he might then have returned from Bagdad, a full grown and accomplished man. I thought it necessary to give him previous notice of the nuptials, upon which my friend and I had agreed. But, judge,
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my dear friend, how great was my astonishment, when he told me, that he could not agree to my proposal; for that he was already married, and lain with his wife, who was ravishingly beautiful, and to whom he was determined to remain faithful. I have great confidence in his governor, who is truly a sage. I feared some indiscretion on the part of his eunuchs; but I am now certainly assured, that even they have not suffered any woman to come near my son.

"He shewed a ring which had been given him; it seemed of great value. They proposed bringing it to me; but he then hid it. His mother has fruitlessly attempted to draw from him an account of those wild fancies which have filled his head. He is now sick, and you see me here in great pain."

Giafar, who was not yet cured of his own passion, readily sympathised with the situation of young Hazad-Chebib, and with the anxiety of his father. Had it been proper, he could here have made a good many discoveries. But he had as yet no other knowledge of the princess Herak, except what he had learned from the blind man's narrative; and was therefore willing to conceal the secret, both from the father and the young man, till he should see an end to the princess's adventure,—and should be able to ascertain, whether the marriage celebrated by the genies was to turn out an illusion, or a decree of fate. However, he prevailed with the father to carry him immediately to the sick-bed of his dear son.

"Who can tell, my friend," said he, "whether the cure of your son may not be one purpose, among others, for which I have been blindly conducted hither by fate, to be enlightened

ened by the blind? On this head I can say no more at present; but, some future day, when we shall have been farther instructed by the progress of events, I hope to give you palpable conviction, that there are some chosen vessels whom heaven distinguishes from the rest of mankind, and watches over with peculiar care, making them serve as points of connection to link the destinies of others: Mahomet and our Prophet are instances of this. The star of your son calls him, you may be sure, to some great work, essential to the public good; and I am perhaps sent hither by my star, to preserve, or succour him."

Chebib could not avoid acknowledging that there was great reason in what Giafar observed. They accordingly set out together next day for the country-house to which the young man had been sent for the recovery of his health. They found him walking in the open air with his governor; but his appearance was languid and sickly. His father's caresses seemed to revive and encourage him. He paid his compliments, in the most graceful and obliging manner, to his father's friend, whom his mother and his governor had before mentioned to him. Chebib, taking the governor aside, left Hazad alone with Giafar. The prince of the Barmecides immediately began to speak to the young man, in a tone of tender affection, concerning the melancholy which seemed to hang about him; and begged to know from what sources it had arisen. "Alas! my Lord," replied Hazad, "would that I could hide, even from myself, a passion which occasions so much uneasiness to my father! But it leaves me not a moment's peace. I am married; and the love which

which I feel for my wife, consumes my heart.”
“ But, was it in your father’s palace that you saw her ?” said Giafar : “ We are assured that you have been no where else : Do you know who she is ?” “ I know not,” replied Hazad ; “ but the fairest flowers in my father’s garden are only faint emblems of her beauty. I know not where I was when I saw her ; but it seemed to be a place of great magnificence. I found myself suddenly lying half asleep beside her. She then tenderly pressed my hand several different times, which almost awakened me. I felt an emotion, which I cannot describe, affecting my whole frame ; and gently returned the pressure of her hand, without knowing what I did. Some other persons were in the apartment ; but I saw only her. They said, that they would marry us ; at which I was overjoyed. They put a ring on the finger of each : mine I still possess, and value it more than life. Hence, my Lord, arises my unhappiness. Having been united to the most charming object upon earth, although instantly parted from her, I cannot obey my father, and marry another. It is impossible. Would they but cease to teaze me about the other woman, I might comfort myself with the hope of again seeing her whom I love : for, why may I not see her again, since I have seen her once ? She certainly suffers as much as I at seeing herself divided from me : for she pressed my hand tenderly ; and she certainly loves me with all her heart.”

Giafar was not a little affected with this account of the state of his heart, confided to him by the young man. “ Dear youth,” said he, “ trust me with your ring but for a moment, till I shall shew it to your father ; and I promise you,
upon

upon the word of a Musulman, to return it in a few minutes. I hope to persuade your father to break off the negociation for the marriage which he has proposed to you: Yet, if this favour should be denied me, you must certainly shew so much regard for your father, and so much kindness to me, as to take some food. I will order your servants to fetch some refreshments; and you must eat cheerfully, that you may have strength to take your horse, and attend us to Damascus; for you have no other cause of indisposition, except languid spirits, and a feebleness of frame."

Hazad, thus flattered with the hope of escaping the threatened marriage, through Giafar's interposition, intrusted him with his ring, and promised to do what he required. Giafar went to find Chebib, and shewed him the ring which had been put into his hands. It was a balass-ruby, inestimable for its size and brilliancy. The governor was sent back to his pupil, with orders to have dinner served up to him. Chebib, now convinced that those whose conduct appears to be in a particular manner under the direction of fate, are not to be subjected to the arrangements concerted by men,—agreed to lay aside his intentions concerning the marriage of his son, till he should see the mystery of the ring unfold itself. Young Chebib was still anxious about the success of his new friend's negociation. But his father received him in so open and affectionate a manner, as soon made him easy. Giafar soon after restored the ring to his finger; they sat down at table; and the young man, now that his uneasiness was partly removed, appeared to have recovered his appetite. The friends passed the rest
of

of that day, and the ensuing night, in Chebib's country-house. Next day they returned to Damascus. Entering the city, they heard the public criers, in the name of Abdel-Melec-Ben-Merouan, invite the grandees of the state, citizens, and strangers, to a splendid festival on the following day. "I will accompany your son and you to this entertainment," said Giafar to Chebib: "Strangers are invited; and it will be said that you have brought your astrologer with you. This will appear more natural, than if you should appear there without me. But I will assume the Indian gown and turban, as the dress the most suitable to the character in which I am to act." This arrangement being settled, the two friends set about preparing for the business of the next day.

We have too many things of greater importance on our hands at present, to descend here into a minute detail of the various preparations which Abdel-Melec made for the feast, with which he was to entertain the public. That prince was naturally of an avaricious character, yet sought to appear generous; and, upon occasions of shew, rather distinguished himself by an ostentatious, but tasteless profusion. He never forgot, however, to squeeze from his people, by oppressive extortion, enough to make up for what he had lavished upon them in vain ostentation. In the outer courts, the squares, and the avenues belonging to his palace, three hundred tables were set out, and bespread with all imaginable delicacies. Two thousand slaves attended to serve the guests; and bands of musicians stood ready to heighten the pleasures of the entertainment, with the sounds of all the various instruments of

their art. Each table was set in a separate tent : they seemed so many camps in the midst of the city. Abdel-Melec pleased himself with the idea of entertaining Giafar, although in disguise, and unknown, with so splendid a festival, so greatly superior to all that could be said of the boasted generosity of Chebib. He was at the same time anxious about the means by which the young supposed criminal was to point out the grand vizier among so great a crowd.

"Sire," said Zizialé, "he is at the feast in one of these tents." At the same time, she shewed him a white butterfly, of an uncommon size, in the air : "Follow it with your eye, Sire," said she ; "enter the tent upon which it first rests ; it will enter after you, and place itself on the grand vizier's turban." The king did as Zizialé directed, and went to salute Giafar, who sat at one of the first tables, between Chebib and his son. The vizier, when he saw himself thus discovered, threw off his disguise, and received the compliments of the king of Damascus, with the respect due to the sovereign in whose dominions he then was. Abdel-Melec prevailed with Giafar and his two companions, to pass with him into the royal tent. The people joyfully shouted, as they passed, "Long live the great prince Giafar, and Abdel-Melec-Ben-Merouan !" These exclamations soon resounded through all the camp : and the crowd soon thronged round the spot where they knew the Caliph's representative to be. The king of Damascus affected to load Giafar, and even his hosts, with every possible expression of kindness. But the secret feelings of his heart were far from corresponding with his external behaviour. His government being
that

that of a tyrant, he both feared and hated Chebib; and he was persuaded, that, in consequence of information secretly given by that nobleman, Giafar had come thus secretly, to examine into the truth of the complaints made against his government. It was only some such errand as this, or else the loss of the Caliph's favour to himself, that could have induced the second person in the empire to absent himself from Bagdad for so considerable a time, and to lead an obscure and private life in Damascus. In either of these cases, Abdel-Melec intended to destroy Chebib: and, if the grand vizier was really in disgrace with his master, he thought it would be glorious for him to complete his ruin. But these secret reflections were concealed under an assumed air of assiduous attention and respect, and of high pleasure which he pretended to enjoy, in having, for so short a time, so illustrious a guest as the second personage in the universe. While the king of Damascus was thus divided between secret designs to ruin his guest, and a pretended assiduity in doing him honour; Giafar opened his hand, and found in it a bit of paper: For Markaff, by Zizialé's orders, had transformed himself from a butterfly into a billet, on which the following words were written: "*Interpose now in behalf of the person who addressed you from the foot of the scaffold.*" The billet instantly disappeared; but the prince remembered the contents.

"I was very sensibly obliged to you," said he to Abdel-Melec, "by the honour which you did me three days ago, by suspending the punishment of the young criminal, upon his barely invoking my name. I believe I know who he is, and I suppose him innocent. You will do me a

pleasure, by ordering him to be conducted hither, and put into my hands."

Abdel-Melec prepared to refuse. In this way he might hold out a snare to entrap Giafar, and would at least see what was that minister's own opinion of his credit with his master. "You know," replied he, "that the crime is unpardonable, of which that young man has been convicted. None but the Caliph can remit his punishment: yet you, as his Highness's minister, may publicly respite the youth's sentence, in his name." Giafar felt himself embarrassed by this reply. But suddenly, before he had uttered any thing in answer, the sound of military instruments announced the arrival of new guests to Abdel-Melec. The person who approached, was no other than Almokadan-Hassan, general of the Zorans, those brave soldiers, of the Barmecide race, who composed the flower of the Caliph's army, and held the honourable rank of his personal guards. Hassan was accompanied by the whole Zorans, officers and private men; and was the bearer of a letter from the Caliph to prince Giafar, recalling the vizier to his sovereign's presence. The letter was dictated in the most affectionate language; and contained, among other things, the following particulars concerning Giafar's journey to Damascus.

"You are, by this time," my dear vizier, "in a condition to answer one of my questions; and the progress of events will soon enable both you and me to satisfy ourselves respecting all the rest. I am to have my part in the affair, although I know not yet what it is to be. It was not Haroun, your friend, that compelled you to hurry to Damascus upon a little mule; but the power of fate, which

which had foreordained for you this adventure. The Caliph and your father were no more than instruments in the hand of fate. The splendour which shall accompany your return into Bagdad, shall more than efface the remembrance of the humble guise in which you left it. Your modest uncomplaining obedience to my commands, must give you new claims upon my friendship and esteem; and conciliate to you, in a higher degree than ever, the admiration and good-will of the public." While Giafar read this letter, the van-guard of his faithful Zorans arrived in the camp, and it resounded with their martial music: They all earnestly expressed their joy at seeing their beloved prince; and, as they came up, every one kneeled before him, and kissed his hand. Giafar, retaining only Almokadan in his company, sent the rest to encamp without the walls of Damascus.

This scene, while it gave the highest joy to Chebib, greatly alarmed Abdel-Melec. From that moment, he was no longer master in his own palace; he feared, that Almokadan-Hassan might be the bearer of other orders, beside that which commanded the vizier's return: for, what could the Caliph mean by sending his whole guard to Giafar? With this and other reflections, did the king of Damascus's conscience now torment him. The first thing that he could think of, to divert the storm, was, to send for the young prisoner, and to deliver him into the hands of Giafar, with the papers relative to his trial. While the servants went to execute this order, he pressed the grand vizier to come and take up his lodging in the royal palace. The prince of the Barmecides handsomely excused himself.

"Sire," answered he, "Chebib received me when I was unknown, when only motives of humanity could interest him in my favour. The honour which I could now do him, by becoming his guest in the character of the Caliph's minister, will be only a trifling compensation for so great generosity as he has shewn to me." So saying, he took leave of Abdel-Melec, and returned with Almokadan-Hassan to Chebib's palace. Hardly had they entered, when the Chief Justice himself came to put the young criminal, with the papers of his process, into Giafar's hands. Hazad-Chebib and Zizialé had only a transient glimpse of each other. Zizialé felt herself affected, but restrained her emotions. Hazad was so sensibly touched, that he became suddenly indisposed. Chebib was concerned; but Giafar encouraged him. "It is nothing, my friend," said he, "but a slight symptom of the same disease with which I am but too well acquainted myself; since it still continues to torture me, even amidst the multiplicity of affairs in which I am now involved. Make your son to go instantly to bed; assign a small chamber to this young man whom the king has sent to me; I have something to say to him in private, but will be here again instantly. Chebib retired, to see proper care taken of his son, and to give directions for the accommodation of the general of the Zorans, and the young prisoner who had been liberated. Giafar no sooner knew that the latter was alone, than he went into the chamber, shut the door behind him, and thus addressed Zizialé.

"Princess, you see that we are already acquainted. Only one expedient remains to you, by which you may conceal yourself here, and prosecute

prosecute your views in a suitable manner. You must pass for a young eunuch, whom I am carrying to the Caliph's wife Zobeide. A young wife accompanies me from Damascus, and you must attend her in disguise. In the mean time, I shall conceal you as carefully as possible, provided you betray not yourself. Above all things, beware of exposing yourself to Hazad's eyes: you may occasion his death. Have patience, till I can so order every thing, that he may become your husband, with the consent of those to whom you both owe dutiful obedience. Leave me to manage all, and have no farther recourse to supernatural means. It is to prudence and discretion, that you must trust for the successful accomplishment of an event, which is no doubt predicted by your star; but which, false steps, of more sorts than one, have almost frustrated." Zizialé was confounded at these words from Giafar. She imagined him to be inspired; and resolved to submit to his directions, with the most implicit obedience.

From the Persian princess, the vizier hastened to his friend Chebib. Him he found with his son, whose sudden illness was by this time gone off. However, rest being what was most necessary to the young man, they both persuaded him, with the gentlest and most obliging language, to go to bed; and immediately left his apartment. "I cannot comprehend," said Chebib, "as they returned to their own, how such a change can have been produced on my son's constitution. Till within this short time, it was the most robust I ever saw; but now, the slightest accident affects him." "The cause is neither more nor less than this," replied Giafar, "that your son is in love."

love." "But how can he possibly have fallen in love?" replied Chebib; "for, whatever plausibility that ring may give to the story which he tells, I can consider it in no other light than as a dream of fancy." "There is more truth in it, than you imagine, my friend," replied Giafar: "He and I have talked of it since he first opened his mind to me. He has described the apartment in which he found himself laid by the side of his bride. In all Arabia, I know none of the fashion which he describes; and as he has never yet been out of your own palace, you must know yourself, whether any of your wives be lodged in a room, of which the roof and walls are adorned with a net-work of gold, and the floor is of glass stained with figures of flowers. The apartment which he saw, must have been nobly illuminated; for he says his eyes were dazzled with the light. Indeed I could not fully comprehend, but was rather obliged to guess at what he attempted to describe. But, my friend, it is in this style of luxury that the palaces of Persia are fitted up."

"And do you think," said Chebib, "that in one night he can have been carried to the heart of Persia, and brought back hither?"

"My dear host," replied Giafar, "if it is fore-ordained that your son shall contract a marriage, through which blessings are to be conferred upon a certain part of the earth, and if heaven interposes to accomplish that event, time and space may be annihilated for his accommodation."

"Omar was^N urging on the siege of Aleppo, while his spouse Fatme kneeled to perform her evening prayer at Medina. As she ended, "O my God!" exclaimed she, "that I might this
very

very hour embrace my husband !” Scarcely had she formed the wish, when she was lifted up, and conveyed thither by the two angels whom, observing the usual practice of our religion, she had saluted, on the right and on the left hand, when she kneeled down to her prayer.

“ Courage,” my dear friend ; “ heaven has wrought wonders in my behalf. You have been one of its principal instruments in its extraordinary dispensations towards me. Be assured, then, that if, to prove your virtue, it may suffer obstacles to arise in the way of your happiness ; yet shall your star soon break forth, with brighter lustre, from amidst the clouds that shade it. Every thing concurs to give me the fairest and firmest hopes of your fortune ; but my soul is tormented by a fatal passion, and has lost its tranquillity.”

Chebib here interrupted his friend, and said, “ The passion which you have conceived, need give you no uneasiness. The young lady whom you love is called Negemet. I shall convey you to-morrow, to the house of her father, Emir Scheffander-Hassan. The cadi will accompany us. You shall then marry her ; and she will remain with her father, till your departure.”

This promise made Giafar easy, and the two friends parted. Chebib went to give some necessary orders for the entertainment of his guests ; and Giafar called Almokadan-Hassan, to inquire how he had left prince Barmekir, and what the Zorans had thought of his own long absence, seeing that his presence and constant services were so necessary to the Caliph.

Almokadan informed him, that prince Barmekir had obviated any apprehensions which the Zorans

Zorans might have conceived concerning the situation of his son; and that the respectable old man had left his retirement in the country, and appeared every day at the Caliph's palace, where he was treated by the sovereign with every mark of confidence and favour. "The report at Bagdad," continued Almokadan, "is, that you came hither upon a very important commission; and your faithful Zorans have been earnestly concerned for your success, and honourable return." In all this, Giafar saw plain expressions of the unabated kindness, and the usual prudence of Haroun. "You set out abruptly to come hither," said he to Almokadan: "probably none of your officers has brought a wife with him?" "Prince," replied Almokadan, "Fetné, my wife, rides like an Amazon. She would share the satisfaction which the Caliph's goodness offered me, in dispatching me to you. She is lodged in the camp, in a separate tent with two of her eunuchs." "You shall add to these a third," said Giafar, "whom I have procured, to be presented, upon my arrival, to Zobeide. Your wife must take care of him, and treat him kindly: Hereafter, he may perhaps be of no small service to us both."

Giafar then waited upon the princess of Persia, and informed her how he had ordered matters, that she might live in a manner becoming her sex, till the instant of their departure. Zizi-
alé was committed to Almokadan, and Giafar returned to his friends, being now satisfied with the precautions he had taken, and having his mind wholly engrossed with the idea of the lovely wife to whom he was about to be contracted, and with the thoughts of his return to Bagdad.

dad. Chebib was too attentive to every thing that might contribute to the satisfaction of his guest, not to remind him, at an early hour next day, of the steps which they were to take with respect to the new ties in which the vizier was to engage himself. He sent for the cadi, explained the nature of the contract, to be made out, and sent him to the house of Scheffander-Hassan. The fair Negemet had been legally divorced, and had returned to her father, enriched with her whole dowry, and with all the presents which she had received: she submitted to her fate with a painful resignation.

Scheffander regarded this event with sentiments of a different sort. The greatest prince upon earth, next after the Caliph, was about to become his son-in-law. He received the cadi with marks of the highest satisfaction. The necessary witnesses were called in. Chebib immediately appeared, introducing the bridegroom; the contract was made out; and the ceremonies of the marriage performed. Negemet lifted her veil; tears seemed ready to flow from her fair eyes; yet the radiance which they shed, re-animated the flame which glowed in the vizier's heart. So breaks the sun with warmth and lustre through those watery clouds that overcast the sky.

Negemet at last received the ring, and became the wife of Giafar. But the multiplicity of business in which the Barmecide prince was engaged till the very moment of his departure, and the want of a lodging in which he might give his wife a proper reception, occasioned the consummation of the marriage to be necessarily deferred. Negemet remained with her mother, till all should be ready for her departure with the grand vizier.

But

But orders were in the mean time given, to make ready an elegant and convenient tarterowan for her accommodation in the course of her journey. In the mean time, all Damascus was in motion, previous to the departure of the grand vizier. He himself was busied in a variety of concerns, which had given him no trouble while he remained the unknown guest of Chebib. All eagerly gathered about him, to shew their respect, to pay their homage, to make their court. Giafar, weary of these attentions, was retiring to pass some short time with his newly acquired father-in-law Scheffander; when the king of Damascus invited him pressingly to an entertainment in the royal palace; and the Caliph's minister was withheld from the indulgence of his love.

On the other hand, he would not depart without testifying his gratitude to the different citizens of Damascus, whose kindness he had experienced. He sent for the tavern-keeper, who had treated him with so much attention, and presented him with two purses of gold. He gave the confessor a noble reward for his hospitality, admitted his three children into the Caliph's guard, and caused them to be handsomely equipped and mounted. He could not discover the fisherman, even by the most assiduous search that could be made; and was therefore obliged to content himself with recommending him to God, and the great Prophet. The king of Damascus had orders to pay each of the two blind men, an yearly pension of five hundred pieces of gold. The dervises had disappeared, perhaps of purpose to avoid the vizier's generosity. At last, all was ready for his departure. The Zorans were encamped upon the side of Coubit-Nafs-

Nafs-il-Saphir, and only waited till he should appear among them, and give orders for their march.

Giafar, therefore, set out from Damascus to the camp. His young wife, the fair Negemet, had already arrived there in her carriage. She occupied a separate tent; and was served by her eunuchs, and protected by a guard of Zorans. Abdelmelec, with all his court, and all the nobles of the kingdom of Damascus, accompanied the vizier on his way; and were received at Coubet-Nafs-il-Saphir in three pavilions, each of which was three hundred feet long: golden globes glittered on their tops, and streamers of party-coloured silk waved from them through the air.

A sumptuous feast had been prepared for this numerous company. Giafar sat down at the first table, between Abdelmelec and Chebib. He had previously recommended young Hazad to the fidelity of Almokadan, and had charged that general to keep the youth constantly about him, and to take all imaginable care of him.

Martial music played, while the company at table indulged in festivity: A detachment of Zorans, commanded by one of their captains, went to Coubet-il-Nasser, to add one to the lamps already sparkling upon that hill,—more beautiful and bright than any of those by which it had been gratefully illuminated by the former illustrious guests of Chebib,—except only the lamp set up in the name of the Caliph Haroun Al-raschid.

What was passing upon Coubet-il-Nasser, was observed from the camp on the side of Coubet-Nafs-il-Saphir. The soldiers of the king of Da-

mascus's guard, were informed by the Zorans what it meant. This they reported to Abdelmelec. His jealousy and hatred against Chebib, were greatly exasperated. In these horrible dispositions he left Giafar; and returned to the city, accompanied by all his court. He immediately dismissed his courtiers, and went to meditate by himself, in the retirement of the palace, upon means for the ruin of a man who had attained a height of reputation, from which he derived greater consequence, than the splendour and power of the throne could confer.

In the camp of Coubit-Nafs-il-Saphir, almost the whole night was spent in preparations for the journey of next day. The fair Negemet, as her tent was to be taken up very early in the morning, passed the night in her carriage, guarded by her eunuchs. Among these, Almokadan had placed Zizialé, who was known to him only in the character of a eunuch to be presented to Zobeide. Young Hazad was disposed in a place where he might enjoy rest. But his father Chebib had remained with Giafar, to assist him in preparing for his departure.

The sun at last entered the gates of the east. The two friends parted, with every tender expression of affection and regret. Chebib returned to Damascus; and Giafar proceeded towards Bagdad.

The grand vizier urged on his company with all the speed that his desire to obey the orders, and gratify the impatience of the Caliph, could inspire; no less than with an eagerness to meet the caresses of his own family, and to resume his post in the empire. He halted once, to give the men and the beasts of burden time for refreshment;

ment; but they continued their march all that day, and the next night.

At sunset, on the second day, it became necessary for this small army to rest, that they might be the better able to support the fatigue of the remaining journey. He ordered them to stop, and set up their tents in the middle of an agreeable plain, at the confluence of two rivulets, the banks of which were clad with trees, and afforded excellent pasture. He chose out the most delightful spot for the tent of his young wife Negemet. He had given her, as a companion in the litter, the young supposed eunuch, who was to be presented to the Caliph's lady. Around Negemet's tent, stood the tents of the eunuchs appointed to serve her. These were at a small distance from the camp, and were protected by a particular guard.

When Giafar had viewed his camp, and found that none had remained behind,—and had also taken the proper precautions to make abundance, under wise œconomy, reign through every tent; he sent for Kalil, the fair Negemet's first eunuch, and directed him to tell his mistress, that, with her leave, he intended to dine with her. The eunuch was, at the same time, the bearer of a very beautiful ring, to be presented to his mistress. Kalil carried the message, and returned with an obliging answer from Negemet, who had respectfully received the ring. Giafar then gave Kalil orders to remove the young eunuch, and to carry him to rest in a tent beside that of Negemet. He then sent him to pay his compliments again to the lady, and to inform her that he would immediately wait upon her. The grand vizier next inquired of Almokadan, how young

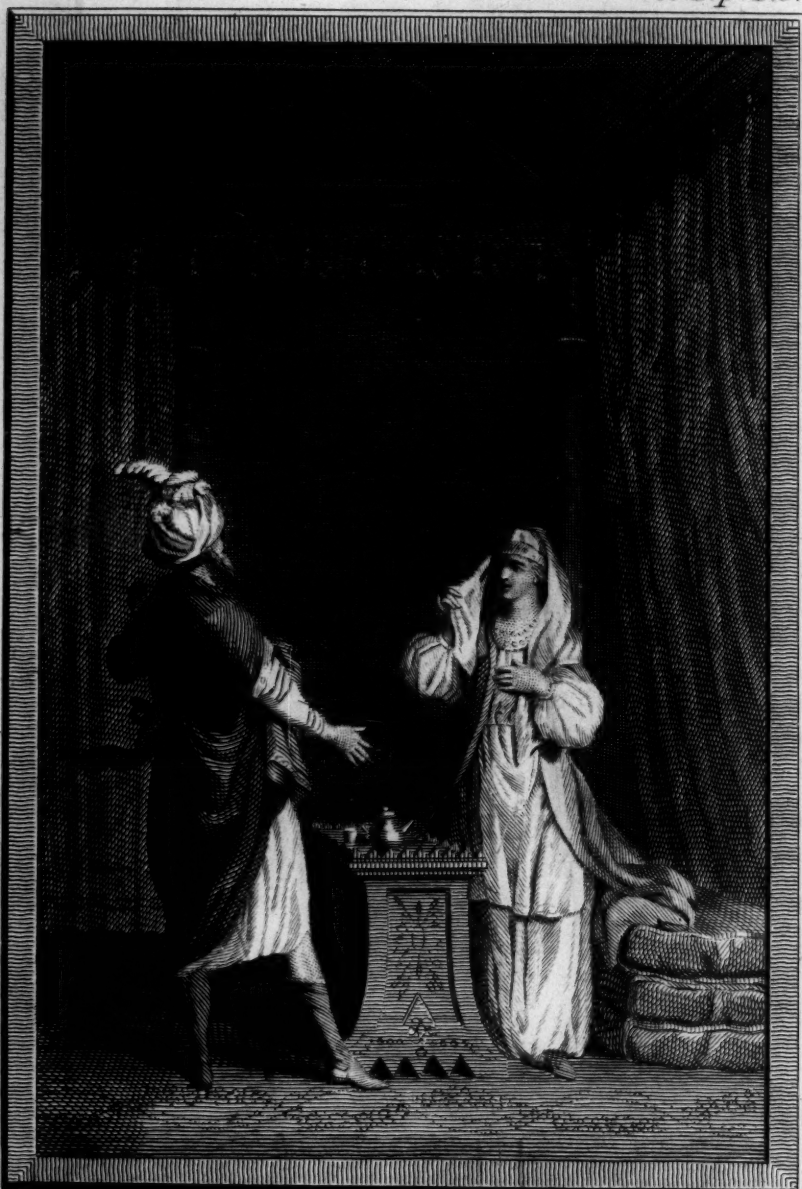
Hazad had borne the fatigue. Receiving a satisfactory answer, he flew, on the wings of love, to enjoy the first private interview with the idol of his soul.

Negemet was seated upon a carpet. She rose before the vizier, and bowed to salute him; but she still wore her veil, as if he had been a stranger. "Dear Negemet," said he, accosting her with a degree of surprise, "I have already had the happiness of seeing your face; and, with your husband, you cannot but know, that you are dispensed from the observation of the law, which commands women to conceal their faces from all other men but their husbands."

"Prince," replied Negemet, in a gentle tone of voice, yet with greater firmness than was to have been expected from her youth and inexperience, "you are indeed my husband by law: but, when I shall have told you my reasons for wearing my veil in your presence; the dignity, the generosity, the delicacy of your sentiments, cannot but induce you to approve of my reserve." Giafar, more and more surprised, desired to know those reasons; and the fair Negemet proceeded.

"Great prince, judge of Chebib's friendship, by the sacrifice which he has made. He saw you passionately in love with a young woman, whom you had seen watering flowers near a window in our palace, opposite to which you then sat. He was alarmed for your health; and that anxiety sacrificed a union, which, but three months before, had been formed under the happiest auspices. To preserve your life, and to promote your happiness, he yielded up what was dear to himself: For I was his favourite wife; and you may recollect me to be the young wo-

man



*Yes, you are truly worthy the friendship
of the virtuous Chebik.*

man whom you saw watering the flowers." Giafar continued for some time silent. Love, at first, struggled in his breast, against the sentiments of friendship, gratitude, honour. But the contest, although violent, was soon over. Habituated to virtue, he triumphed over the effects of passion. The Barmecide prince then spoke thus: "O! Wonder of friendship and generosity!" cried he, "exceeding whatever my father could conceive, when he foretold that I was to meet with wonders! The noble, generous Chebib, to save me from the fatal effects of my passion, yielded up, in my favour, an inestimable treasure, with the value of which he was fully acquainted. Can I be capable of abusing his friendly magnanimity? No, madam: you are no longer my wife, but the wife of my beloved Chebib; and, if you please, you shall be my dear and respectable sister."

Negemet, pleased with this protestation from the vizier, lifted up her veil. "Prince," said she, "I will no longer hide the poor charms of this face, from the eye of him who has shown me all the beauty of his soul: and I hope you will not impute it to pride, when I presume to say, as the wife of Chebib, That you are truly worthy of the friendship of that virtuous man." "Ah! Madam," said Giafar, "may I ever merit the same praise! But, since you are now my sister, let us consult how we may best disappoint slander and envy. By returning immediately to Damascus, you might give occasion to some disagreeable reports. In Bagdad, you shall occupy any apartment in my palace that you choose; and, if you would do us the greatest honour and pleasure, you shall remain with my wife Fatmé,

on the same footing on which I was with Chebib. You shall see the Caliph's court, and shall enjoy in it every distinction, such as may silence envy, and may contribute to the glory of your husband, for whose honour I am no less passionately interested than for my own."

"Prince," replied Negemet, "my honour, and the honour of my husband, are in your hands. I am ready to submit implicitly to your direction." Giafar then ordered Kalil, the eunuch, to bring the young traveller from Almokadan's tent.

"Who is that young man?" asked Negemet.—"Your husband's son," replied the vizier.—"What!" cried she, overjoyed, "Is our dear Hazad here! And shall I have the pleasure of seeing him!"—"He will be here immediately, Madam," replied Giafar; "I am happy to understand that his presence will be agreeable to you;—it is what you may frequently enjoy. I shall order his tent to be brought beside yours. Almokadan shall know that you are wife to my friend Chebib, and are desirous of undertaking the care of his son. Speak to the eunuch Kalil, in my presence; recommend the young man to him; and assume, in all respects, and before every one, the character of my friend's wife, that this news may, as soon as possible, circulate through the camp."

Hazad entered; and Negemet embraced him with a tenderness, the emotions of which were so strong, that she almost fainted. Giafar witnessed, with pleasure and admiration, this effect of his friend's virtues. These had operated even so, as to change the ordinary manners of the Haram; in which, it rarely happens that one
wife

wife can endure to see the child of another. The tenderness which Chebib inspired, was of a nature to express itself towards all who were related to him.

Dinner was now brought in; and Giafar, recovering from his passion, as if he had awaked from a deep and dangerous sleep, beheld, with affectionate regard, a wife and her step-son, between whom a mutual attachment, equally warm and innocent, seemed to subsist. He soon after retired, leaving them together, and bidding Kallil, the eunuch, wait at the tent door. He went now to visit Zizialé, and was not a little concerned to think how he might keep her from the sight of young Hazad. When the princess of Persia saw the vizier enter, she advanced hastily to meet him, and begged him to grant her a favour.

"Prince," said she, "the heat of the weather, and the fatigue of the journey, have made a considerable impression on Hazad's countenance; and the more so, as he is newly risen out of his illness. I have observed him through the windows of the litter. I can use means to preserve myself from the heat of the sun, which he has not in his power. Allow me to attend Almokadan's Amazon wife; I shall like that better, than to be confined in a carriage, even although it be beside the loveliest woman in the world, and one who is at the same time your wife."

"She is not my wife, princess," replied Giafar; "but the wife of my friend Chebib. She comes to Bagdad to stay with my wife Fatmé, till Chebib shall come to share the same hospitality with me, which I have so happily experienced

ced from him. Since it is your desire, Hazad shall occupy your place in his mother-in-law's litter. I am happy to agree to an arrangement which seems to give you pleasure."

Giafar gave the proper orders, and then retired to rest for a short time. His heart had felt a violent struggle between contending passions; but he had gained new strength of mind, from the very effort that he had made to obtain the mastery over himself. Although he might admire the amazing generosity of his friend, yet had he no reason to blush for himself. He had gained the ascendent over one of the most violent passions he had ever felt.

When night came, this numerous and brilliant train again proceeded on their way to Bagdad. Ziziale rode, without inconvenience, by the side of Almokadan's wife. The obliging Markaff, transforming himself into a cloud, interposed by day between her and the torrid rays of the sun, and thus sailed along through the air over her head. Hazad, in the mean time, sat in Negemet's carriage, and related to her the surprising story of his passion, without imagining that the dear object was so near him. As to Giafar, the nearer he approached to the end of his journey, so much the more was his mind filled with pleasure, at the idea of his being still in favour with the Caliph. Had the vizier, at his arrival from Damascus, been the husband of Negemet, the affectionate Fatmè might have been mortified; and perhaps, Barmekir, too, might have shown some dissatisfaction. It is highly agreeable, when we can flatter ourselves with the hope of making all about us happy in our presence. Such was the state of mind among our travellers, when they

they beheld from an eminence the steeples of Bagdad, and, at the same time, observed several companies of men on horseback, coming out from the city to meet the grand vizier. Some of the Zorans had ridden forward, and given notice of his approach. The Caliph had so predisposed matters, as to give an air of triumph to the grand vizier's return into the city. By this means he re-established the credit of his favourite, whom he meant now to invest with still higher authority, than that which he had before enjoyed. Giafar did not alight at his own palace; Almokadan conducted Negemet and Hazad thither: But the vizier went straightway to pay his homage to Haroun, carrying with him the young Persian princess, who was still disguised as an eunuch. The Caliph, seeing Giafar approach, prevented the respectful homage which that minister hastened to pay him, by public expressions of his sincere friendship; and the Sovereign and his vizier retired together, to complete their common satisfaction, by a mutual explanation.

The Caliph required from Giafar an account of his whole adventures since his departure from Bagdad, without the omission of the slightest circumstance; and the vizier ingenuously related every incident that had befallen him. At the story of his passion for Negemet, the Caliph could not forbear bursting out into laughter. "Proceed, my friend, proceed," said he; "you shall know immediately why the particulars of this adventure have so merry an effect upon me." The vizier continuing, proceeded next to recount what respected Zizialé. "Where is she?" inquired Haroun,— "As I entered the city," replied

replied Giafar, "I recommended her to an eunuch belonging to the princess Zobeide."—"And the little lover, where is he?"—"In my palace," replied Giafar; and proceeded, without farther interruption, to recite the rest of his adventures, till his arrival in Bagdad. The vizier perceived, that Haroun heard, with great satisfaction, the various particulars which he related concerning the generosity of that Chebib whom he himself so highly esteemed; and could read, in the eyes of him, who was both his master and his friend, the fullest approbation of his magnanimity in repressing his passion.

At length the prince of the Barmecides had finished his relation; and it became the Caliph's turn to speak.

"My dear vizier," said he, "if the Giaffer were to give us as much trouble every year as it has in the present, it would be for our advantage never to open it. You have been put to great trouble; yet all is not over. The rest, however, respects you much less than me. I am to set out to Damascus, at the very first signal that I shall receive. Happily, that signal is not to be ambiguous. But before I explain myself on this subject, I must require you to tell me, why I laughed at first, upon that occasion of reading in the Giaffer."

"You have had the goodness to put me on the way," replied the vizier. "The book informed you that I should fall foolishly in love."

"I next appeared somewhat sad," said Haroun; "you must likewise explain the cause of my sadness."—"You saw my friend," answered the vizier, "sacrificing his own happiness to mine."—"And do you know why I wept?" replied

replied the Caliph.—“No,” said the vizier.—“This,” replied Haroun, “I must explain to you.”

“You have exposed the most virtuous man on earth to the blackest calumny, and to the greatest indignities. Yet, be not too much alarmed for him; heaven incessantly watches over his safety: but as soon as the sun’s disk shall appear ruddy, I must set out for Damascus. Let the swiftest camels in my stables, and in your own, be in readiness, without suggesting any suspicion that they are for my use. Let Almokadan likewise have the Zorans ready, as if he were going upon some expedition in the neighbourhood, of but little consequence. While I pay my tribute to Destiny, you shall do as I have done in your absence; govern alone. You will easily forgive me for having left you to set out in the habit of a dervise, when you consider that you could have learned or done nothing, had you not been quite alone, unknown, and perfectly ignorant of what you were going about.”

It was day-break before this long conversation ended. Giafar went to rest in his own palace, where, it had happily been foreseen, that the Caliph and he would not soon separate, after having been so long without seeing one another.

Zobeide took the young princess of Persia under her protection; and assigned her, female attendants, eunuchs, and a commodious apartment.

Zizialé dismissed Markaff, and determined no longer to practise the lessons of her nurse.

Negemet was treated with all possible attention by Giafar’s lady, who insisted upon her occupying her own apartment: she, at the same time,

time, received the most flattering distinctions at the Caliph's court.

Young Hazad had no meaner a governor than Giafar himself, to acquaint him with the practice of affairs, and give him an insight into human characters. All was well at Bagdad. But the scene was now changed at Damascus; and every thing there was on the point of going ill.

Abdelmelec-Ben-Merouan had returned to his capital, with a heart full of rage. The tyrant (he was indeed secretly such, nor could be otherwise so, under the imperial authority of Haroun-Alraschid) was conscious of secret crimes. He had always viewed the incorruptible probity of Chebib with a malignant eye. He considered him as a spy for the Caliph; and was convinced, that the purpose of the grand vizier's coming to Damascus, had been, to learn the peoples sentiments concerning the present government. Giafar had seemed to be satisfied; but were appearances to be trusted?

He had remarked, that Chebib had entertained his illustrious guest, even with greater splendour and luxury than he had ever before displayed; and that, to conciliate the favour of the second person in the empire, he had not only given him his only son as an hostage, but had even surrendered up his own wife to him, whose charms were so generally celebrated. Chebib was known to love his son with tender affection, and to be passionately fond of beauty. It was not natural for any man to make such sacrifices to a stranger; and the friendship, of a fresh date, by which Giafar and Chebib were said to be united, passed in the eyes of Abdelmelec for a mere chimera.

The

The king, tormented by remorse and jealousy, began to contrive how he might best ruin a man whom he looked upon as his enemy. His passion for fine women, seemed likely to afford the best pretext.

In Damascus, and in the same quarter of the city in which Chebib lived, was a joiner, whose wife was reckoned the handsomest woman in the city. But the qualities of her mind were not equal to those of her person. Abdelmelec contrived to spread a report, that Chebib was passionately in love with her, and intended to replace with this conquest, the daughter of Sohef-fander-Hassan, whom he had given up to Giafar; to make the husband soon after be assassinated by some of his own people; and to impute the crime to Chebib. But he was, first, cautious to prepare proofs, which might so establish the certainty of the crime, that the accused might be legally put to death, without appearing to be in any degree the victim of personal hatred.

It was necessary to order matters so, that Giafar should have no pretext for taking part with Chebib; but that the latter should, even in the eyes of that minister, who was his friend, remain convicted of the crime for which the judge had condemned him.

It was necessary that he should procure some very striking proof. The sovereign of Damascus, in one of his fits of ostentatious profusion, had given Chebib a very handsome ring. Chebib being very careful to discharge every act of attention and respect that he owed to his prince, although he had other rings of greater value than that, never went to dine at the palace, without

putting it on, in preference to all others, before he sat down at Abdelmelec's table.

This ring the king wished to have secretly stolen from Chebib. An eunuch, well known to be expert at such tricks, undertook the task. He succeeded in it, one night after a supper, that had been prolonged to a late hour. Chebib, without perceiving it, returned to his own palace, wanting both his ring and his poniard; for the eunuch had even exceeded the orders of Abdelmelec, in taking away the weapon.

When the tyrant was in possession of the ring and poniard, he pushed on the rest of his wicked intrigue. The joiner was assassinated before Chebib's gate, one evening as he returned home. The murderers escaped unseen.

A foldier of Abdelmelec's guard, who was as corrupt and as completely wicked as his master, was in love with the joiner's widow, and beloved by her. He persuaded her to accuse Chebib of having made her offers in her husband's lifetime, if she would yield to his desires, and either divorce her husband, or force him to divorce her; and that, not long after the assassination, he had sent his ring to her, with assurance that he would marry her.

Four false witnesses were provided, to depose, that they had seen Chebib commit the crime of which he was accused. The widow was promised, that Chebib's property should be confiscated for her use; and the lifeguard-man was to have his palace; of which Abdelmelec reserved to himself only the furniture.

The king of Damascus had assembled a divan, in which Chebib sat at the head of all the nobles and great officers of the state.

Notice

Notice was given to Abdelmelec, that a woman, wearing her veil, was coming in to demand justice on an atrocious crime committed by a man high in power. The sovereign gave orders that she should be admitted. The joiner's widow entered, sobbing; and, in tears, prostrated herself before Abdelmelec, and demanded justice upon the murderer of her husband. It was the unanimous advice of the divan, that if she knew who the guilty person was, and could produce satisfactory evidence, justice ought to be speedily done her.

The widow then renewed her tale, and related the whole story, which had been put into her mouth by her lover the lifeguard-man, without naming the person accused. As her first proof, she offered the ring which had been sent her by the murderer of her husband, and begged leave to deposite it; naming, at the same time, four witnesses who had seen the commission of the murder, and had brought away the assassin's poniard.

Abdelmelec ordered the secretary to the divan to receive the ring, and to write down the names of the four witnesses; and the widow was then conducted out of the divan.

When she had retired, Abdelmelec thus spoke: "This is a crime, of a shocking nature. My counsellors and ministers will inform me what punishment the law denounces upon such guilt." "Sire," replied the Musti, "the punishment is capital; and is ordained equally in the three books of Moses, of Jesus the son of Mary, and of our Holy Prophet. A Musulman, guilty of murder, cannot be an object of pardon." The whole assembly, and even Chebib, who spoke last, agreed

with the Mufti. Chebib however added, that if it were juft that the guilty fhould die, yet it would be unjuft to punifh any man, upon bare prefumptions; and that the complaint and the proofs offered, ought firft to be ferioufly examined.

Nothing can be more reasonable than this, returned Abdelmelec; and fince religion is here injured, by this attempt againft the holy union of marriage, I here charge you, Mufti, to afemble the cadis, without delay, and carry the procefs before them, that the criminal, by our flacknefs, be not fuffered to efcape, and murder encouraged; but that judgment may to-morrow be pronounced upon him here in the divan."

Chebib ran the greateft risk, without fufpecting in the leaft his danger. But at the very moment of the joiner Houffein's affafination, the phenomenon, announced by the Giaffer, had been feen at Bagdad. The fun was covered with blood; and Haroun instantly fet out for Damafcus. In the mean time, all was in an uproar through that city. Chebib's houfe was befet; and notice was given him, that he muft appear to-morrow in the divan, to answer for the affafination of Houffein, and for attempting to feduce his wife. The virtuous Chebib raifed his foul in prayer to God, and commended his fafety to the great Prophet. After performing this duty, he fupped, and lay down to reft. The whole city were aftonifhed, at feeing fo virtuous and fo beneficent a man fufpected of a crime fo atrocious, as that which was imputed to him. The poor, who had lived by his bounty, lamented to fee him, who was their ftaff, cut off. A few malicious perfons however rejoiced; and
Abdel-Melec's

Abdel-Melec's emissaries were every where at pains to insinuate, that an excessive passion for women might hurry, even the very best men, into violations of their general principles of conduct. In the following night, the whole city was one scene of anxiety and tumult.

By day-break, however, the two blind men met at the gate of the high mosque. They came both to offer up their prayers for Chebib.

"My wife," said the eldest, "has had a strange dream last night. She saw all the lamps in the dome of Coubet-il-Nasser first nearly extinguished, and then suddenly rekindled by a gentle breeze, and the light raised to such a blaze, that the eye could not bear it.

"My father," replied the younger, "has seen Markaff; and was told by him, at parting, that he was going to transform himself into a fish in the Abana, and there to suffer himself to be taken by some fisherman's line; of purpose," he said, "to serve Chebib. What can that great man do with a dish of fish in his present situation? The genie Karkass, my old friend, so contracted his bulk when he last left me, that I perfectly lost sight of him. He told me, that he was going to steal into a certain place, where only the air and he could penetrate. Tantoura, their queen, had assigned them these parts to perform, for the safety of Chebib. That worthy man, brother, has many enemies here below; but God permits him to have friends, of a different species, who are equally supernatural and powerful."

"What say you of Chebib?" said to the blind man, one of the three dervises, who now entered the mosque. "If you love him, of whom you speak, receive these alms in the name of that

truly generous man, and join us in praying to God in the mosque, that he will enlighten his judges, and do justice on his false accusers.”—

“ You shall not offer up your prayers alone,” said three other men, who now came in from three different quarters: “ We came on the same errand.” One of them had a parrot on his hand; another carried a large fish in a basket; the third had a purse, almost empty, hanging by his girdle, and was followed by a young boy.

These new-comers addressed the dervises; “ Since you come to pray for the generous Chebib,” said they, “ permit us to accompany you in your devotions.”—“ Most willingly,” said the dervises; “ but here are a bird and a fish, that cannot enter with us.”—“ I shall take care of them,” said the young man who came last; “ and all the rest of the company went immediately into the mosque.” Their prayers were offered up with the utmost ardour, and intermixed with sighs and groans. When these were ended, the company thus accidentally assembled, (they were, the fisherman, the master of the tavern, and the confectioner, of whom mention has been made in the narrative of Giafar’s adventures, with the three dervises who were Chebib’s guests), before leaving the mosque, began a conversation concerning the common reason which had brought them all to prayers at so early an hour, and communicated to one another their intentions to proceed to the place where the judges were met.

The divan was to sit in the open air; and Abdelmelec had ordered proclamation to be made, that all the people might assist at the trial.

As Chebib’s friends were leaving the mosque, they observed a crowd gathered about the young
man

man who had been left to keep the parrot and the fish. The bird was incessantly crying, *Chebib is innocent.*

The bird was no other than Tantoura, the queen of the genies, who having transformed herself into a parrot, and taking the place of one that was in the house of the confectioner, had deafened the whole house from day-break with the constant repetition of the same cry. The confectioner, struck with so singular a circumstance, had determined to present the bird at the divan, as soon as he had offered up his morning prayer. The fisherman had gone out, early in the morning, to cast his net into the river; and, observing a large fish floating near the surface of the water, had cast a line, pronouncing, at the same time, aloud, "*In the name of the generous Chebib, who is persecuted by the malice of men.*" No sooner was the line cast, than the fish advanced its head, and greedily swallowed the hook.

The fisherman had brought this fish, asserting, that, although mute, it would give evidence in favour of Chebib; for it was clear, that it had eagerly suffered itself to be taken, at the mention of Chebib's name.

The keeper of the tavern said, That, two or three days before, four ill-looking fellows had come to dine in his house; that, in the height of their festivity, they had quarrelled among themselves about the division of a large sum of money which they had in a purse; one of them pretending, that he ought to have a larger share, because he had done more than the rest. They had thrown the dishes at each others heads, and had been at last parted by the people in the house.

One

One of them complained, that he had been rendered unable to go any where without a guide, having received a blow upon the only eye of which he had the use;—the other, though apparently sound, being actually paralytic. I prevailed with one of his companions," continued the master of the tavern, "to conduct him home. Those people were in such confusion when they went out of my house, that they left behind them the purse in which they had brought the gold, with two sequins still remaining in it. I thought with myself, that the purse might find an owner among the crowd that would this day assemble to witness Chebib's trial, and have hung it by my girdle."

"We," said the three dervises, "are guests and friends of Chebib's. Having offered up our prayers for him, we mean to proceed to the place of trial, where we shall see how far the wickedness of men, will be suffered, by Divine justice, to prevail against this illustrious pattern of generosity and virtue."

This little party proceeded together to the scene of trial. Wherever they found difficulty in making their way through the crowd, the pretty parrot upon the young man's hand, called out, in a loud and distinctly articulate voice, "*Make way! Make way!*" and every one obeyed, without reflecting upon the singularity of the command, or the character of its author.

At last, these friends of Chebib advanced to the space where the criminal was to compare, face to face, with his accusers; and came so near, as almost to touch clothes with the latter, who were already in their place. There was only a railing between them.

The

The seats set for the judges, according to their different ranks, were soon filled. They waited only for Abdel-Melec. He soon made his appearance, and ordered the criminal to be brought forward.

Chebib was now on the fatal scene. The widow, who was plaintiff against him, in a mourning dress, and wearing a veil so deep as to float upon the ground, sat without the railing.

At the command of the judges, she was about to rise, and to renew her accusation of him whom she pretended to be the murderer of her husband; when the parrot suddenly uttered some mock sounds of a trumpet, so perfectly imitated, that the attention of all was turned that way, and hindered the widow of Houssein from opening her mouth.

The surprise occasioned by the note of the parrot, had almost gone off, when a repetition of the same sound was heard: but it was no longer a mock sound; it was accompanied with the noise of other military instruments, and all together bespoke the arrival of the Caliph; who had just alighted from his dromedary, and was attended by the principal officers of his guard.

Abdel-Melec eagerly descended from his throne, and went to meet his sovereign.

"King of Damascus," said the Caliph, "let not my arrival here surprise you. It is my duty to watch over the happiness of the Musulmans, of whom, I am, under heaven, the head here below. I owe to all the same proofs of my vigilance; and I come to rejoice in the prosperity which I suppose you make all your subjects enjoy.

"At my arrival, I was informed, that you were engaged in a solemn act of justice, which
you

you were desirous that your people should witness. Delicacy forbids all suspicion of the motives and views which are to determine the judges. I approve your precaution, in placing guards round the place which you have chosen for such a meeting, as the proper means to preserve order, and enforce the execution of the law. As you are employed about the most laborious and painful function of royalty, I am happy I have arrived in time to assist you in bearing this burden; and I readily join you in presiding in this trial."

Abdel-Melec was confounded, as if he had been thunderstruck, by this declaration of the Caliph. He replied, with a degree of hesitation, which rendered his meaning unintelligible. The Caliph seated himself on the throne; and the king of Damascus sat down, trembling, upon his left hand.

The Caliph saw before him, the woman who was the complainer; he spoke to her, and, with a voice of mildness and majesty, ordered her to repeat her complaint.

Houffsein's widow could not support the over-awing presence of the successor of Mahomet. Falsehood died away upon her lips, while she attempted to utter it; and she was seized with a tremor and faintness, which made her unable to speak. The clerk was obliged to read the complaint as it had been written down; after which, he shewed the ring, which was brought as a pretended evidence of the project of seduction; and the poniard, which served to shew who was the assassin. The ring was passed through the hands of the judges, and half of them knew it to have belonged to Chebib. Abdel-Melec affirmed, that
he

he had presented it to him three years before. The Caliph took the ring in his hand, looked upon it, and then ordered it to be given to Chebib, and him to say whether he knew it for his own. "This ring was mine," replied Chebib; "I lost it some time since; but never gave, or offered it, to any person whomsoever." "Did you ever know the woman who accuses you?" replied Haroun: "Did you ever send any person to make offers to her in your name?"—"Sublime Caliph," replied Chebib, "I have heard her mentioned; but I never saw her, and never employed any person to mention me to her. I have known her husband, and he has wrought for me; I have done him good, but never harm."

"Here are four witnesses," continued the Caliph, "who make oath, that they saw you assassinate Houffsein within a few steps of your own door; after which, you went into your house."

"Protector of the Musulmans!" replied Chebib, "it belongs to God to confound falsehood; not to me, against whom its efforts are directed. But I see here three dervises, who are my guests; and I was engaged in company with them, in the very time at which it is pretended that I committed the murder." The Caliph gave orders that the four accusers should be heard. Their several depositions were found to agree perfectly. They had all four sought refuge from a sudden blast, under a portico. While thus concealed behind the pillars, which served to shelter them, they saw Chebib come behind Houffsein, and assassinate him with two blows of his poniard, and knew it to be he, and no other. They had picked up the weapon which dropped from the assassin, and carried it next day to the widow.

widow. The Caliph desired to see the weapon, and made it to be shewn to Chebib. "I lost it at the same time that I lost my ring; for I know it to be mine, by the handle, and by my cypher engraven on the blade. I perceive that it has been set with false stones, instead of the diamonds with which it was before ornamented. It was stolen from me on the same day with my ring." The Caliph hearing this declaration, only said to Abdel-Melec, the poniard seems to me very suspicious. The stones are undoubtedly false. They must have been set by some jeweller; and we shall find him, unless he be an accomplice in the theft: It is not natural, that Chebib, who was so magnificent in every thing else, should affect to wear false jewels." After this short conversation with the king of Damascus, Haroun asked the first witness; "Did you see Chebib assassinate Houffsein?"—"I swear," replied the witness, "by our great Prophet, that I saw him with my two eyes."—"He lies!" instantly interrupted a firm, though shrill voice: "*He saw him not, even with one eye.*" It was the parrot perched upon the young man's finger that thus gave the lie to the witness. The exclamation occasioned some small disturbance. While the author was sought out, the Caliph proceeded to interrogate the second witness in the same manner as the first: "It is as sure," replied this man, "that I saw Chebib assassinate Houffsein, as it is true that I am a Musulman."—"He lies!" pronounced the same voice which had been heard before, "for he is uncircumcised." It was now perceived to be the parrot who spoke. Achmet-Balan, a lifeguard-man in the service of the king of Damascus, attempted to seize the bird; but it pecked

pecked his hand so as to bring the blood, and with a stroke of its bill beat out the stone from the collet of his ring. The diamond dropping out, rolled to the feet of Chebib. He picked it up, and said, "Here is the brilliant that adorned the pommel of my poniard: The Caliph will know it, for I received it from his bounty."

The noise, occasioned by these several incidents, subsiding, the Caliph proceeded to interrogate the third witness. He happening to stand beside the fisherman, laid his hand upon the large fish, the jaw of which had been half torn away when the hook which it had swallowed was drawn out of its mouth: "I swear," said he, "that my deposition is as true, as it is that I now lay my hand upon a dead fish." No sooner had he uttered this oath, than the fish, springing from the basket, struck the perjured witness so violently with its tail upon the face, that blood gushed from his nose; and then, leaping over the heads of the bystanders, plunged into a canal formed by the waters of the river, and at a small distance from the scene of the trial.

The Caliph was not so much surprised, as pleased, by these wonders; and proceeded to hear the last witness. This man, thinking that he saw by the girdle of the master of the tavern, a purse belonging to himself, and which he did not recollect that he had left in his house: "I swear," replied he, "that my accusation is as true, as it is that I now see my own purse hanging by that man's girdle."—"Thou liest," answered the bird again; "*it is the purse of Achmet-Balan, the king's lifeguard-man; his mark is on the bottom.*"

After so many proofs of the parrot's sagacity, the Caliph turned to Abdel-melec: "Brother,"

said he, "you see here, proofs, of what has been so often told us, that Chebib has interested all the animals of nature in his favour. You see what efforts this bird and that fish have made, to vindicate him from the blackest and most atrocious calumny that can be uttered against any man. If I have any skill or practice in the discussion of criminal affairs, I think I already know part of those who are concerned in this horrid conspiracy against virtue. I know not who their chief may be; but I have means in my hand to detect even him."

The Caliph then turning to the parrot, said, "Pretty little friend of Chebib, tell us the name of the murderer of Houffein, who is no doubt the same that has sought the life of Chebib."—"You will find it inscribed within the ring that was stolen from Chebib," replied the parrot; and instantly flew away. The Caliph asked the ring to be delivered to him. No jeweller was needed; the stone fell from the collet of the ring. Karkas, who had taken his place within it, made it drop out, as if voluntarily. The name of Abdel-melec was then found within it. It is impossible to describe what the king of Damascus had suffered, while the Caliph was employed in the preceding investigation. But, when that prince saw a series of prodigies start forward to detect his guilt, he sat fixed in inexpressible astonishment and confusion.

"Abdel-melec," said the Caliph, with that awe-commanding air which he so well knew how to assume, "descend from that throne which you have disgraced. Strip yourself of the insignia of a dignity, of which I here divest you. Go, take the place of that virtuous man, whom your base machinations have been on the point of robbing

at once of his honour and his life. You have assembled the people to witness a memorable act of justice; and Heaven has sent me hither, to turn the mischief which you intended, upon your own head, and the heads of your accomplices."

Abdel-melec remained still motionless, and silent. Haroun again raised his voice, and spoke in so dreadful a tone, that terror, rather than a disposition to obey, brought the unhappy prince to the foot of his throne.

"Seize him," said Haroun to the officers of justice: "He shall live only to witness the punishment of those whom he has seduced to become the instruments of his wickedness. You, nobles and citizens of Damascus, here present; and you, strangers, whatever have been the motives that brought you hither; if any sort of fear have hitherto prevented you from bearing witness in favour of innocence, and detecting guilt; speak out now, without constraint, and assist me to discover all the accomplices in these horrid machinations."

"Sire," said then one of the dervises, "my two brothers, who are here, and myself, saw the four men who have given their depositions against Chebib, coming out from the house of Achmet-Balan; next day after the murder of Houssain the joiner. They went to dine together in the house of the tavern-keeper beside us, and quarrelled about the division of a large sum in gold. One of them forgot his purse, and the cypher of Achmet-Balan, is inscribed upon the bottom of it, as the bird has signified."

"Let Achmet-Balan put off the robe which he wears, and lay down the rod which he carries, as one of the royal lifeguard-men," said the Caliph:

lip: " Let him and his four accomplices be instantly put to death, after a confession of their crime, and of the names of their associates shall have been obtained from them : let the widow of Houffein be cast into a dungeon, there to await her fate."

The Caliph's orders were no sooner given, than obeyed ; and all the criminals were dragged to the place of execution. Abdel-melec had only the cruel distinction of dying last.

When those disagreeable objects were removed, the Caliph, resuming his ordinary serenity, thus spoke to Chebib. " Come, my old host ; my friend, my brother ; take your seat here beside me. I will not insult you, by placing on your head the same diadem which has been disgraced by your predecessor ; but I make you king of Damascus. You are disposed, I see, to refuse my wishes : Nevertheless, reflect, that when I request you to accept the government of this kingdom, it is in the name of God, who is all-powerful over you and me, and of our great Prophet ; by whose authority, I command you to ascend the royal seat, and all the princes and grandees here met, to acknowledge you their king." Chebib, notwithstanding his modest repugnance, was forced to obey the Caliph's orders ; and was encouraged to it, by a shout of approbation, which resounded through all Damascus. After this ceremony, the Caliph Haroun became again the guest of Chebib. They conversed together about the interests of the state ; and the Caliph gave Chebib news of Giafar, of the amiable Negemet, and of young Hazad. A messenger from the grand vizier, had, before this, informed him of the resolution which that minister had

had taken with respect to Negemet; and the new king of Damascus was less pleased with the restoration of his beloved wife, than with the idea, that he owed her to the magnanimous self-denial of his friend.

When the conversation on this head was ended, Haroun next informed him of his intention to marry Hazad with the daughter of the Sultan of Herak, and related the whole story of the two rings, which had been concealed by Giafar. The Caliph, at the same time, engaged to ask Zizialé for Hazad, from the Sultan her father, when he should give him notice, that she was at Bagdad with Zobeide. The Caliph's ambassadors departed, without delay, for the Sultan of Herak's court.

Haroun Alraschid, after establishing Chebib upon the throne, returned, without delay, to Bagdad. His friend the vizier shuddered to hear what dangers Chebib had been exposed to; and the whole prediction of the Giaffer was explained.

While the Caliph was on his return to Bagdad, Chebib, having been raised, almost against his will, to royal honours, began to make a nobler use of the knowledge which he had acquired, even than that to which he had originally designed it: for, what good was it not in his power to do, now that he was king, and possessed all the virtues and the knowledge that can adorn the royal station?

The first proof of his greatness of soul, which he gave in his new station, was in comforting and relieving the family of Abdel-melec. He restored them all the private property of that prince, and acted rather as a father, than as a king, towards them. But his generosity appeared less extraor-

dinary since his advancement to the throne, because it was now more widely diffused. He now viewed himself merely as the steward of the public treasure, to which he had added his own.

After the sudden disappearance of the princess Zizialé, the sultan of Herak and his wife had remained in the deepest distress. The envoys from the Caliph, and the king of Damascus, gave them the greatest joy, by informing them that she was with Zobeide; and the letters which they at the same time received, signifying that the proposed marriage with Hazad, was an arrangement, to which fate had contributed, they agreed to it so much the more readily, because the generosity of Chebib, Hazad's father, had gained him the esteem of all Persia; and the lustre of his virtues was now augmented in the eyes of all, by his advancement to the throne. The sultan of Herak instantly set out for Bagdad.

The interests of the state, obliged the new king of Damascus to repair thither at the same time. The Caliph's court was therefore soon adorned with the presence of those two sovereigns. Haroun received the sultan in his own palace, with every mark of respect. But the new king of Damascus was the guest of his friend Giafar. The marriage of Hazad with the princess Zizialé, followed soon after those persons were met whose consent to it was necessary. The charming Negemet resumed her former matrimonial engagement, with new rights upon the affections of her husband. The marriages were celebrated with the most sumptuous and festive entertainments. The generous Chebib, thus happy in the favours of fortune, and in the delights of love and friendship, soon after returned to his own dominions; and

and the sultan of Herak carried with him his daughter's new-married husband, who by the marriage became his heir-apparent.

The Caliph and Giafar, Zobeide and Fatmé, could not but feel the pain of separation from persons who were so dear to them: for the princesses had conceived no less an attachment for Zizialé and Negemet, than their husbands entertained for Chebib and his son. But fate had ordained, that those two happy and respectable pairs should go to promote the happiness of those dominions over which they were to reign. The Caliph, the vizier, and their two wives, were obliged to consent to this sacrifice, in order that the work, of which they had been the instruments, might not remain imperfect.

Scheherazade having thus finished the story of the adventures of Giafar and Chebib, addressed herself to Schahriar. "Sire, your majesty must agree, that Caliph Haroun Alraschid displayed, in those several adventures, all the activity, prudence and penetration, which can be expected from a great man. As the eminent qualities of that illustrious prince, are themes of praise, which cannot soon be exhausted; if my narratives are not tiresome to your majesty, I shall next enter upon the story of the adventures of *Halechalbé and the young unknown lady*, in which the penetration and justice of the Caliph, appear in a light highly worthy of his character." The sultan, who was never weary of hearing Scheherazade, begged her to proceed with her story, which she did in the following words.

STORY

STORY of HALECHALBE and the Unknown LADY.

CALIPH HAROUN ALRASCHID, one day called his grand vizier Giafar, and Mesfrou the chief of the eunuchs. "I wish to go into Bagdad in disguise," said he, "and there visit the hospitals, that I may see whether the administration of them be wisely and attentively conducted; whether the sick are treated with due care and tenderness. I will disguise myself as a dervise. You must accompany me: do you therefore disguise yourselves, so that you may not be known."

The Caliph was obeyed, and proceeded immediately with his favourite servants into the city. He was soon in the middle of the hospitals. Every thing seemed to be in as good order as he could wish; till at length he advanced to the gate of a wide court, within which he heard a noise. Then addressing Giafar, "Whence comes this noise?" said he. "This is the mad-house," replied the vizier. "Such of those unhappy persons as are harmless, are allowed to walk about in the court; those who are more furious, are confined in separate cells around it."

"Let us enter," said the Caliph; "the scene must be interesting. Let us first examine, whether all those confined here, have been deprived of their liberty upon good reasons. There are many who go about loose through the world, who, if they were treated according to their character, would be confined among the mad: and here may possibly be some, who might be enlarged with great safety and advantage both to themselves

selves and the public. Let each of us enter into conversation with one of those unhappy persons : let us determine by lot who shall begin, and set immediately about making the experiment." The lot fell upon Mesrour.

They all three went within the court ; and the chief eunuch went straight up to the first cell. Within it was a man about forty years of age, smoking a pipe with a very serious air, while his elbow rested upon a table, on which lay some papers. He saluted the smoker, and his salutation was returned. " I suppose, Sir," said Mesrour, " that you have the care of those people who are making a noise in the court ?"—" That charge," replied the other, " is a burden which does not ly upon my shoulders. I find enough to do in taking care of myself ; and there is nothing more required of me."—" But surely," said Mesrour, " you are not confined here for madness."—" Why should not I ? Do you think me wiser than another ? They have done that justice to me, which should be done for all the inhabitants of Bagdad, if they had their due. I have no reason to complain. The judgment of my friends and acquaintance has sent me hither, and they come daily to see me."

" I understand you," said Mesrour ; " we have all more or less madness in our composition ; but when this does not exceed a certain pitch, it is quite unnecessary to turn the key upon us ; it is only extreme madness—"

" Ah !" interrupted the smoker ; " men forgive one another any common piece of folly, however ridiculous. But whenever any one is able to exalt his ideas and his sentiments above those of others ; they feel the disgrace of their inferiority,

inferiority, and strive to remove him out of the way. This is my own case. I know more than the vulgar; and the reward of my knowledge, is my confinement here."

"In what branch of knowledge did you excel?" replied Mefrour.—"In astrology," returned the other; "a science, which is the key to all other sciences."—"Were you skilled in astrology?"—"I should have been skilled in it; but my proficiency was interrupted."—"Did you correspond with the stars?"—"I did."—"Whose good graces among them did you enjoy?"—"The Moon's."—"Are you no longer in favour with her?"—"Since my confinement, she has done with me as she pleases. She had great obligations to me formerly; but now she thinks not of those. She had a huge wart on her nose, and I removed it. She is obliged to me, therefore, for that fine face which you sometimes see. Besides, by directing her to turn a little out of the way, I saved her from an eclipse, which all the astronomers were expecting. She was at first grateful for these favours; but, since my confinement, if I address myself to her when she is waxing, she is still too feeble to do any thing in my favour; when she is full, she covers herself up with clouds and mists; but when she is waning, all her malignant influence is very much at my service; she rains defluxions, rheums, and catarrhs upon me in great plenty. I am seeking at present to deliver myself from this latter mark of her beneficence. Ah! if ever I can lay hold on her, she shall learn, that she has not obliged an ungrateful person."

"And if you had her, how would you keep her?" replied Mefrour.—"Nothing easier," replied

plied the gentleman who was enjoying his pipe, "if I had the assistance of such a man as you. She will come this evening, about nine o'clock, to view herself, and to bathe in that well within the court. I will give you my table; you shall ly in ambush under it. She will have no fear of you; and while she amuses herself in the water, you must suddenly shut the mouth of the well upon her, and then we shall have her. This would be a lucky hit for us both; and we should then hear what she could say to justify herself."

"Will she speak?" said Mesrour, "and shall we understand her?"—"I say not, that *you* will very distinctly understand her: But as for me, my ear is practised in listening to the harmony of the celestial bodies; I shall not lose a single word; we must know the structure of your ear again."

So saying, the smoker laid down his pipe, and set to examine Mesrour's ear. But, seizing it abruptly, he pulled it with all his might, and cried, "Your ear is too short!"—Mesrour cried aloud for pain. The keeper ran up, and relieved him from the astrologer's hands; and Mesrour, holding his ear with both hands, thus returned to give the Caliph an account of his unpleasant adventure.

"I have been long persuaded," said Haroun, laughing, "that madmen, who have an air of wisdom, are those against whom we should be most upon our guard." "Come, Giafar," said he to his grand vizier, "you are forewarned to take care of your ears. Go, make your trial among these people. Mesrour and I will keep near the cell you enter, that we may be ready to come to your assistance."

The

The grand vizier had already turned his eye towards the door of a cell, at which sat a man with a venerable beard, and an air of reverence. He began with giving the old man alms, before he would salute him. The man seemed to value the civility more than the alms. He returned Giafar's salutation, and made a signal to him to sit down beside him. "Young man," said he, "you no doubt came hither to receive instruction. You may thank heaven for sending you to me. Of what chapter, in my book, would you hear the text, or the explanation?"

The book that this man talked of, was neither more nor less than a small square tablet of cedar, on which there was not a letter to be seen. "What book is that?" inquired Giafar.

"What! Can you not distinguish, in these characters, the finger of God, and the dictates of the angel Gabriel? A Musulman! and yet not know the divine koran, nor recognize, in him who is before you, the inspired of God, the great prophet Mahomet?"

The vizier, at this exclamation, arose and retired. He again joined the Caliph. "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "I am driven off the stage. The man to whom I addressed myself, utters the most horrid blasphemy. He says, that he is our great Prophet."

"You cannot be absolutely certain that this is blasphemy," returned the Caliph. "Any man may call himself a prophet, who can prove his mission by miracles. Go,—ask him to shew you a miracle."

Giafar obeyed; and returning to the old man, "If you are Mahomet," said he, "who could put you into such a place of confinement as this?"

"My

"My ungrateful people," replied the pretended prophet, "would not believe in me; a circumstance, at which I am more distressed than surprised: they scarcely believe in God."

"But," replied Giafar, "a prophet proves his mission by miracles; why have you performed none of these?"

"My people," replied the pretended Mahomet, "should first have asked for them; but they are afraid of conviction; they desire not to believe."

"But could you perform miracles?" said Giafar.—"Is it a doubt with you, whether Mahomet can or not?"—"Perform one immediately then."

—"Most willingly. Climb up to the top of that minaret, by the flight of steps upon the outside: Throw yourself headlong, without fear; and, when you fall, although you should be dashed into a thousand pieces, depend upon it, I shall set you on your feet again, stouter, and straighter, and handsomer than you are at present."

"Ah!" said Giafar, retiring, "I had rather believe you a prophet, than bring you to this proof of your prophetic authority." The vizier accordingly proceeded to inform the Caliph of the proposal that had been made to him.

"You have learned nothing satisfactory," said Haroun; "for you would make no trial."—"If any body else be fond of the trial," said Giafar, "the man and the minaret are there; I shall not dispute with him the credit of the adventure."

The conversation between the prince and his confidants, was interrupted by some persons who came up, and accosted them. One was the Caliph, and proposed to Haroun, to quit the der-vise's gown, and become his vizier. He offered

to array him in a superb pellice; but what he produced under this name, was an old ragged piece of stuff, dirty, and crawling with vermin. Another came with a basket of nut-shells, offering sweetmeats for sale.

But these short interviews in public, did not answer the end which Haroun had in view; nor did they serve to fulfil his part of the compact. It was now his turn to enter a cell, where he might, like his two companions, have a particular conversation with the person who occupied it.

He went up to one, which seemed to be larger and better furnished than the others. A young man, of a soft and engaging aspect, sat in it upon a sofa, and seemed to be buried in deep melancholy. He held the koran in his hand.

The Caliph accosted him; gave him the usual salutation; and spoke to him in that kind, familiar tone, which his dervise's dress authorised him to assume: "Oh! handsome young man," said he, "why do I meet in this place with a man of so much good sense as you seem to possess?"

At this question, the young man closed his book, modestly opened his eyes, looked upon the dervise, and replied: "All the actions of my life have not been guided by good sense: I have given grounds for the unjust pretexts upon which I am here detained."—"And, pray, may not I hear your history," said the dervise, "since you appear to be in so fit a condition to give it?"

"Pious dervise," replied the young man, "if you were the Caliph, I should desire you to sit down beside me, and would open my heart to you. I daily ask God to send hither that just prince, to hear my complaint; but it were vain for

for me to make any other person my confident. You see before you the victim of his grand vizier Giafar, by whose orders I have been brought hither, upon a pretext which has the semblance of being well-founded. But I can aver, that I am detained here without any good reason; and, were I not supported by religion, I should sink under the distress and horror of my situation."

The Caliph was in the highest degree astonished to hear so rational and connected a train of discourse. He called Giafar and Mesrour, and repeated to them what he had heard. The grand vizier looked attentively upon the young man; and assured the Caliph, that the prisoner and his story were to him absolutely unknown.

Haroun's curiosity became more eager, and made him urgent. He entered the cell with the freedom which all dervises naturally use, and seated himself beside the young man who ascribed his sufferings to Giafar. "Unfortunate young man," said he, "you know that persons in my condition of life enjoy many privileges, and, among others, that of access to the great, and of speaking to them with freedom. The Commander of the Faithful makes himself accessible to us, above all others; depend upon my zeal for your interest; it will be in my power to serve you; and you are going to confide your sorrows to a discreet ear, and a feeling heart."

The young man sighed again, mused for a few moments, shed some tears, and then began his story.

"My name is Halechalbé. My father is provost of the merchants of Bagdad. He one evening invited the principal merchants in the city to sup with him. Each was accompanied by his

eldest son. After the meal, which was plenteous and cheerful, the guests began to talk of their intentions with regard to their children.

“ One had sent his son to reside in a foreign factory; another had intrusted his with a ship laden with goods; a third had been admitted to a share of his father’s trade: in a word, from all that I heard, it appeared that all those young men were, one way or another, profitably engaged in business. After various conversation on this and other subjects, the company retired.

“ I immediately took the opportunity of representing to my father, that I, as son to the first merchant in the city, certainly ought not to remain idle, while so many others of my age were advantageously employed in business. He acknowledged what I said to be reasonable; and proposed, that I should open a warehouse in any quarter of the city I pleased. This proposal fell in with my turn for trade, and my desire of independence. I accepted it, and was, next day, put in possession of a large stock of the finest stuffs of Persia and India. I had slaves, whose skill in the business of trade, relieved me from the more disagreeable parts of the profession.

“ Through the day, I had all the nobility of Bagdad about me, and was thus led to form an acquaintance with them: in the evening I returned regularly to my father’s house. I found this life of business active, and varied, and, in a word, suited to my taste. My father would often visit me in my warehouse, and was pleased to see it so much resorted to by such crowds of the richest and most fashionable customers of both sexes. He took a pleasure in sending me every rare and valuable commodity that he received
from

from abroad; the servants who conducted his trade, had orders to do so.

"I was one day in my counting-room, with a number of people about me, when two ladies of a very engaging appearance came in. The persons who were about me, having gone away, out of respect to them, one of those ladies contrived to disorder her veil, so as to reveal to my eyes, a perfection of beauty that dazzled them.

"My fair visitants sat down on a sofa, asked for my richest stuffs, and bought to the amount of three thousand crowns. By this bargain my profits were five hundred crowns. The goods were wrapped up, and carried away by slaves, by the order of that one of the two ladies who seemed to be the mistress. I was going to hold out my hand for my money, when the young lady spoke thus: "Halechalbé, I have brought no money with me; but you need not be uneasy about what I owe you; I shall return in a few days to pay you, and may then probably make more considerable purchases."

"The other lady now spoke. "Ah, Madam!" said she, "do you talk to the son of the provost of the merchants, a man of known opulence, and with whose merit the Caliph himself is not unacquainted, as if you could doubt that he would hesitate to do himself the honour of favouring such a lady as you with so paltry a credit?"

"This discourse from the companion, the impression which the fair eyes of the mistress had made upon me, with a little natural timidity, occasioned me not only to make no words about the payment, but even to neglect asking the name of the lady to whom I gave credit. She

took her leave very courteously, and went her way; while I remained fixed like a post at my door, and did not even take the precaution to make a slave follow her.

“When I was alone, my imprudence fully appeared to my mind. To whom had I given my goods? Had I forgotten, notwithstanding so many lessons on that head from my father, that Bagdad swarmed with adventurers, who were capable of assuming any tone, and presenting themselves in any character that would favour deceit! Then, every thing about her, even those fine eyes which she had let me see, became suspected. I thought myself robbed, and returned to my father’s house, trembling, in dread of those reproaches which I believed I had drawn upon myself.

“My mother soon perceived my uneasiness. She artfully led me to acknowledge the cause of it, and endeavoured, as much as possible, to calm my uneasiness.—“The merchant who knows not how to lose,” says she, “deserves not to gain. If you are uneasy about making up accounts with your father, my purse shall supply what is wanting.”

“I went next day to my warehouse, still chagrined at my loss, and at finding myself so easily made a dupe of. However, I was not without hopes of seeing the lady return. But evening came, and no lady had appeared. This painful day was followed by three others, which brought no farther news of my fair customer. My mother saw my distress, but could not remove it.

“It was in vain that she told me that she would supply what I had lost out of her own private purse; and that I might regard what had happened

happened as a profitable misfortune; for experience of this sort taught men knowledge. This conversation was to no purpose; nothing could console me for having suffered myself to be duped by a pair of fine eyes, by pretence, and compliments. My vanity was hurt; and this was a great mortification to me.

“On the fourth day, however, my unknown lady suddenly appeared with slaves attending her. —They threw a large purse upon the counter. —“Handsome young man,” said she, “here is your money; count it.” At so desirable, and so unexpected a sight, my fears and uneasiness were removed, and I felt a sudden revolution in my spirits.

“My unknown fair one asked for other stuffs, made her choice, and carried away from the shop, goods to the value of three hundred pieces of gold; I should have given her to the amount of two thousand, so much overjoyed was I. No sooner was she gone, than I returned to my mother, and expressed to her a degree of joy and satisfaction, equal to my former distress. I told her of this day’s happy adventure, and now acknowledged the truth of a maxim which she had in vain employed to soothe me before, that, in trade, where nothing is risked, nothing can be gained.

“At last, my respectable dervise, I continued to carry on the same intercourse with the young unknown lady, till she, having always carried away a greater value in stuffs than the money she had brought, found herself to owe me about ten thousand crowns; a sum equal to all my profits on the goods I had sold her.

“One

“ One day, after opening my warehouse, I had scarcely seated myself on my sofa, when an old woman came in, and accosted me. I supposed that she might want some pellices or stuffs, and offered to show her some goods of that sort, from which she might make her choice.—“ No, my son,” replied she, “ I am charged with a different and much more important commission to you ; I come on the part of the young lady who owes you ten thousand crowns. I have not brought your money ; but I am ordered to tell you, from her, that her reason for preferring you to all the other merchants of stuffs in Bagdad, is because her heart has given you a secret preference of another nature ; in a word, my son, she is handsome, young, and rich, and wishes to marry you. When you have seen and spoken with her, if you like the offer, all the dowry that will be required, is the ten thousand crowns she already owes you ; if you cannot agree, your money shall be paid up. But, in order to determine, you must follow me.”

“ While the old woman was speaking, I felt a flame, of which I had hitherto been insensible, glide through my veins ; it was increased by the hopes of possession ; and I became ardently in love.

“ The fair eyes of the lady, from the very first moment when she had permitted me to see them, had so dazzled and blinded me, to my own prejudice, that I had suffered her to carry away my goods without knowing how I was to be paid. Upon all her subsequent visits, since that time, her veil had entirely concealed the features of her face ; but her flowing robes did not hide the elegance of her shape, the gracefulness

ness of her motions, the form of her foot, or the beauty of her hands.

" Besides, in disputing with me about the prices, she spoke with such sweetness of voice, that she never once left my shop without taking with her something more than the goods she had bought. Yet I knew not well what that something was. She had no sooner left me upon any day, than I found myself uneasy, and I would secretly say, " What a charming lady this ! " After which I immediately fell into a long and deep reverie.

" When the old woman gave me to understand that the unknown lady had a partiality for me, I found myself the most passionate lover in the world. I ordered my slaves to shut up my warehouse, and to inform my father and mother that I should not be immediately home, but was going to amuse myself with my friends in a garden at some distance from the city. Having thus dismissed them, I followed the old woman.

" You shall not have reason to repent of your confidence in me," said she ; " but you must give another proof of it. If you should happen not to like the lady, or the terms which she offers, it will be desirable to her to continue still unknown to you. Her delicacy requires so much ; and I have orders to make you wrap a bandage over your eyes, that you may never know again the house you enter." I willingly submitted to this condition. We retired out of the way into a portico ; and there concealing ourselves behind one of the pillars, she covered my eyes with a very thick silk handkerchief. She made me turn three or four times upon my heels, took me by the hand, and led me after
her

her for a full quarter of an hour. We suddenly stopped; she knocked at a door, which was opened, and shut behind us, when we had entered.

“ My eyes were immediately uncovered, and I was committed to two beautiful female slaves, who were elegantly dressed. They led me through seven different doors; and I was then received by fourteen other slaves, whose beauty and splendid attire absolutely dazzled my sight. I now found myself in a magnificent hall, where every thing was marble, jasper, or gilded work. The adventure had so much the air of a dream, that I strained my eyes, by trying to ascertain whether I were asleep or awake. The old woman, who had hitherto been my close attendant, now left me for a few moments, and returned soon after, with a slave bearing refreshments upon a large vermilion-coloured salver. I sat down to refresh myself.

“ While I was thus engaged, the old woman counted out upon a table, the ten thousand crowns which were due me. “ Here,” said she, “ is your money. Be not uneasy that my mistress has not yet made her appearance. You cannot see her, till after the contract is executed. This is what the law enjoins, and decency requires.

“ The old woman had hardly done speaking, when the *cadi* appeared, followed by ten of his attendants. I arose, and saluted him. Upon this, the old woman said to the man of the law: “ The young lady who means to marry this merchant, has chosen you for her tutor: do you consent to fulfil the office?”

“ The

"The cadi replied, that he thought himself highly honoured by the choice. He proceeded to make out the contract in due form, and had it signed before witnesses. A plentiful collation was served up for him and his company; and a rich suit of clothes, with three hundred sequins, presented to him. After this, he retired, charging the old woman, as he went away, to make his compliments of acknowledgment to his mistress.

"I was so confounded by all this, that, without heeding my money, I rose up to follow the cadi, when he retired. The old woman made me sit down again.—"Are you mad?" said she; "Need you be told, that after the contract follows consummation? Come, shew more discretion; make yourself easy till night; and then all shall be ready for the completion of the ceremony."

"I continued in the hall; a great number of slaves attended, watchful at every motion that I made, and ready to prevent all my wishes. There was something singular in such a situation. I no longer felt the force of that mixed curiosity and desire which had made me lightly submit my eyes to be covered with a bandage, and hasten impatiently hither. The pompous luxury before me, and the strange ceremonial of the marriage, had so confounded me, that I was scarcely in a condition to think of my love.

"Towards evening, a splendid repast was served up to me, consisting of sweetmeats of all kinds, and exquisite wines. I refreshed myself with moderation. No sooner had I made a sign that they might take away, than the old woman took me by the hand, and led me to the bath.

"I



ARABIAN TALES.

" I was there received by eight pretty female slaves, dressed in silken stuffs. They put a bathing dress of the same stuff upon me, went into the water with me, and served me with all the attention and respect, that could have been shewn to the Caliph himself.

" Imagine to yourself, respectable dervise, how great must have been my astonishment ! I was almost stupified. I was soon carried out of the bath by twenty other slaves, still more handsome, and still better dressed than the former. Of these, some held lights ; others, pans full of the most exquisite perfumes, the fragrance of which, intermingling with that of the aloeswood, which had been burned to warm the bath, embalmed the air, and spread upwards to the cieling of the apartments.

" Other refinements of luxury yet awaited me. Twenty slaves going before, conducted me into a superb apartment, where they made me sit down on a sofa, covered with cloth of gold. Melodious music played to entertain me ; so gay, so lively, so melting was it ! that it affected my whole soul. The slaves then proposed to lead me to the nuptial chamber. I arose. A wide door opened ; and I saw the lady advance, who had chosen me for her husband, with twenty slaves before her, whose beauty only her own could exceed.

" At sight of her, I stood for a moment almost without thought or feeling. But, instantaneously, the previous impressions which I had received, gave place to love ; and my passion assumed that absolute power over my mind, which, by its influence, still sustains me in life, under torments far more cruel than death.

" She,

“ She, attended by her twenty slaves, and I by mine ; my fair unknown, and I, now proceeded to the nuptial chamber, and then sat down upon the same sofa.

“ The old woman then entered with four other slaves, bearing different refreshments upon golden salvers. Those consisted of excellent sweetmeats, and of fruits of all sorts. We took, and mutually presented one another, with some of these : the salvers were then removed, and we left alone.

“ I was timid and trembling. My charming fair one encouraged me ; and, taking my hand, “ Halechalbé,” said she, “ I have been in love with you since the day that curiosity first carried me to your shop. The same sentiments carried me several times back, under the pretence of pricing or purchasing stuffs. The little traffic which we have carried on, has afforded me opportunities of seeing better into your character, but has only heightened my passion, and that to such a pitch, as to make me desirous of connecting myself with you for life. Can you give up your liberty for my sake ?”

“ Madam,” replied I, “ your charms failed not of producing their effect upon me, the very first moment my eyes beheld you. I never afterwards saw you, without feeling an inconceivable mixture of pleasing and anxious sensations in my breast. Your departure never failed to give me the most heartfelt pain ; every day I expected you, your idea occupied my whole thoughts. I durst not avow my passion to myself. But since you prevent me, by the expression of your love, I swear, that nothing can equal the ardour of my passion ; and that the sacrifice of liberty is a

very trifle to him, who would lay down his life for you."

"Well, Halechalbé," said she, "what you say has the air of truth. You shall not be required to yield your life; it is necessary to my happiness: but, since we are to enter into a lasting union, listen to the only conditions upon which my heart and my person can be your's."

"You shall remain ignorant of my name and condition, till I can so order circumstances, that I may publicly acknowledge you for my husband. You shall make no inquiries here, after what I wish to conceal from you. The door of this house will be opened only once a year."

"Content, Madam!" exclaimed I; "I am willing to be silent, to continue ignorant, to remain in so blissful a confinement!"—"Stay," said she, "I have still a more rigorous condition to impose upon you. As I give myself entirely up to you, it is but just that you be mine alone. My slaves will become your's, and will pay you a ready obedience; but, unless to command their service, you must not speak to them. If you descend, with one of them, to the slightest familiarity, more than the bare expression of good will; if——I must make you acquainted with my character. I am naturally inclined to jealousy: and if, through any fault of your's, I should become the victim of that fatal passion, I know not to what excess of severity I might be carried by my resentment against you."

"As to that," said I, "make yourself easy, my lovely bride! The ardour of my love secures me against any, even the least, indiscretions of that nature. I may die of sorrow, if I shall cease
to

to be agreeable to you ; but I can never become the victim of misfortune, for offending you."

" At the warmth, and the air of sincerity with which these protestations were uttered, the eyes of my fair bride were filled with tears.—" Halechalbé," said she, " put your hand on my heart; feel how it beats, for fear lest you should have refused my conditions. I am your's for ever. But had you only hesitated, I should have sacrificed my happiness to my delicacy; and we had parted, never to meet again."

" While she spoke thus, I held my hand upon her heart, and its agitation was soon communicated to mine. I pressed my charming wife tenderly in my arms. She fainted away. I called a slave. The least assistance was sufficient to recover her from an accident proceeding from such a cause. The idol of my soul opened her lovely eyes. They were turned with a languishing fondness upon me——"

" But I will not, respectable dervise, detain you with a more minute detail of the incidents of my marriage. They cannot interest you; and the remembrance which I still retain of them, is at present the torment of my life.

" I passed fifteen days in all the felicity of love, forgetful of the rest of the world; forgetful even, I must to my shame confess, of my most essential duties, and never thinking of the anxiety which my father and mother could not but suffer upon my account.

" At last, nature by degrees reclaimed her rights. I began to think, with concern, of the distress which my parents, who were so tenderly attached to me, would unavoidably have felt. Some heavy sighs escaped from me, and my uneasiness

casiness expressed itself on my countenance. My wife, watchful over my happiness, soon remarked the change. She drew my secret from me; and, entering into my anxiety, she condescended herself to point out a way for my relief.

“Dear Halechalbé,” said she, “I approve of your attachment to your father and mother; their relation to you, endears them to me. We have subjected ourselves to laws; but it remains with ourselves to judge, how far these are to be observed; they must not be suffered to injure the ties of nature: you shall go to your parents, spend seven days with them, and even resume your trade. I have good reasons myself for recommending this to you.

“In the first place, it will serve as a cloak to conceal our connections. It puts it in your power to appear or disappear, at pleasure, without creating any suspicions of your being engaged in an intrigue of this nature. Besides, it will farther enable you to acquire, by honourable, open, and generous dealings, the public esteem, on which we may one day have occasion to throw ourselves; for Caliph Alraschid reigns here, and has the ears of spies busy to gather information from every quarter; not to speak of his own, which he employs with great industry. Go, then; my heart shall attend you wherever you are; could it make itself visible, you would see it fluttering about you: besides, you will still be in a manner with me. We have one good old confidant, you know; through her means, I can give you the satisfaction of hearing me spoken of. I shall receive news from you, and acquaint you with my wishes. Above all,” continued she, “as you cannot hide our marriage from your parents,

rents,

rents, recommend to them the most sacred silence upon this subject."

"It was now twilight; and my wife, as she ended speaking, bade the old woman cover my eyes, and conduct me to the portico where I had formerly submitted to the same ceremony. No sooner had my conductress unveiled my eyes, than I flew to my father's house. One of our neighbours was entering the door; she knew me by the light from an adjoining shop. "Halechalbé!" cried she; "What! is it you! In the name of heaven, do not shew yourself to your mother, till she have received previous notice of your return. Come in for a moment with me; my husband will go and prepare her to receive you; your sudden disappearance has reduced her to a state of despair; and, were you to appear abruptly before her, the shock might prove fatal to her feelings.

"Where have you been, you bad young man?" said she, when we were seated. "How could you go off, without acquainting such tender parents with your intentions?"

"I was taken unawares, being to conceal my marriage from the world, and not having a story ready to stop the mouth of curiosity. I had presence of mind, however, to invent a tale, which served my purpose."

"You surprise me, Madam," replied I, "by speaking of uneasiness which I have occasioned to my parents. A happy opportunity having occurred for setting out to Bassora, where I had business of great urgency and importance with one of my most considerable debtors, I had not a moment to lose, and was therefore obliged to set out, without giving my father notice of my
R 3 departure.

departure. But I sent back an express as soon as I had reached Bassora; which must undoubtedly have met with some accident, since no news of me have been received. Our neighbour was satisfied with the excuse."—"In the mean time, you were not only considered as dead here, but even magnificently interred. Yesterday was the day of your burial. I shall tell you the whole story as soon as my husband is gone to inform our neighbours, that their dead son is alive and in good health." The husband took the task upon him with pleasure; and the good woman resumed her story.

"Your slave came home, and told your mother, that you were to pass the rest of the day and night in a garden with your friends. All was easy, therefore, during that night, and the next day. On the subsequent days, all the merchants in Bagdad were in a stir seeking you. Persons were sent in quest of you through all the gardens about the city, through the woods, and to a great distance through the country. When you were no where to be found, and no person could learn any thing of you, it was concluded that you had been insnared, as too often happens in Bagdad to dissipated or inexperienced young men, who often meet death when in pursuit of pleasure.

"Your father and mother tore their hair; your whole family and friends put on mourning; and they sought to find some sort of consolation in a false funeral, at which all the mourners in Bagdad played their part, but where many real tears were at the same time shed; for every body was afflicted with the distress of your parents.

"During

“ During this narrative, O virtuous dervise ! I felt myself very uneasy. I saw the frightful consequences that had followed, from my forgetfulness of myself, and of my most sacred duties : and I have always regarded my subsequent disgrace, and the momentary alienation of mind that followed, as a chastisement inflicted by heaven to punish me for forgetting, in the arms of love, the most sacred duties of nature.

“ The good lady having told me so much of my story as it was necessary that I should know, rose up. “ It is time,” said she, “ for you to go and shew yourself : my husband has now surely announced your arrival. Go, confirm his report.

“ I went therefore into my father’s house. I cannot describe to you the joy of my father, and still less that of my mother, who fainted away in my arms.

“ What ! thou returned from Bassora !” said my father ; “ poor child, the loss which thou mightest have suffered, could not in my eyes equal the risk which thou hast run, and the fatigue which thou hast undergone.

“ Father,” said I, continuing, before our neighbour, to maintain the story which I had thought proper to invent ; “ I know not whether our correspondent will absolutely fail ; but here is enough to make you easy with respect to his debt to us ; here is a diamond which you may put upon your turban, another for the handle of your poniard, a third for the hilt of your scymitar, and a bracelet for my mother. These, I think, are nearly equivalent to the amount of what we have given him credit for.

“ They

“ They again embraced me, without requiring any more particular explanation. In an instant the mourning dress, which had cast a gloom through our house, was laid aside; every one put on his best and gayest clothes. Musicians filled the house; it was illuminated by a thousand lamps; and all my father’s friends and mine were assembled to a splendid banquet. The evening, and great part of the night, were spent by the whole company in merriment and good cheer.

“ Next morning, I thought it became me to undeceive my parents, and to acquaint them with all the circumstances of my adventure as they truly stood. I related the particulars of my marriage, begging them to keep the whole a secret; for, upon that, my happiness greatly depended. Their surprise rose still higher and higher, as I proceeded with my narrative. The valuable jewels which I had brought them from my wife, were speaking proofs.

“ My son must have married a genie’s daughter! The cadi is not called to celebrate such marriages,” said my father:—so they knew not what to think; but they saw me happy, and that was enough to satisfy them.

“ I mentioned to my parents, that I would again enter upon the business of my shop. They were happy to find that the possession of fortune had not turned my spirit from my industry or economy; and I accordingly appeared next day in my warehouse.

“ Every one in that quarter of the city, expressed great satisfaction at seeing me again. As I was no longer actuated by a desire of gain, I shewed myself easy and disinterested in buying and

and selling; and I soon had all Bagdad about me. In the evening, I returned, as formerly, to my father's house.

"On the evening of the sixth day, I gave my father notice that I should disappear a second time. He took measures to place an intelligent shopkeeper to supply my room, who took care to use my customers in the same manner as I had done myself. As to my absence at this time, it was easy to form a plausible pretext to account for it.

"On the evening of the seventh day, my old woman appeared. "Your wife," said she, "impatiently expects you." As I was no less impatient to see her, I eagerly followed my guide. The same mystery as before, was still observed. My wife was waiting for me at the first door. Her fair hands untied the bandage of my eyes.

"I spent other fifteen days still happier than the former, in the enjoyments of mutual love, and in all the delights, the pleasures and the amusements, which the tender care and the wealth of my wife could procure for our entertainment.

"At the end of those short fifteen days, I returned to my father's house, and renewed my attention to business. My parents received me with the greatest marks of tenderness. But I had hardly received the first expressions of their kindness, when I began to long for the seventh day, and to see the good old woman who was to bind a bandage upon my eyes, and to carry me to a recess, which to me was paradise.

"My wife, for her part, appeared to feel our separation no less sensibly than I. When I was absent from the palace, her only means of diverting herself, was by taking a musical instrument,
and

and singing, with her slaves accompanying her, such verses as her passion dictated. She shewed me these at my return. I remember some of them, which I shall recite, if it were only to shew you that my love was returned with equal ardour.

*How cruel is absence, O my love !
Return ; my heart pants for thy return,
As does he, whose eyes are closed in endless night,
To behold again the cheering rays of day.
Why dost thou leave me, O my love !
When thou hast ravished my heart ?
Return, dear light of my life ;
How can I live without thee ?
Every thing contributes to oppress my heart with
despair.
Nothing here has charms for me,
Except when thou art present ;
In thy absence, I am drowned in tears.*

“ Hitherto, I have spoken only of my happiness ; but there now remains only a cruel reverse of fortune for me to describe. It took its rise from an unhappy passion, which Zaliza, my wife’s favourite slave, conceived for me. She carefully disguised her sentiments from her mistress and her companions ; but declared them to me without reserve. To put an end to her importunities, I was obliged to threaten a discovery to my wife. Rage, and a desire of vengeance, filled the maiden’s heart.

“ One day while I was absent, her mistress sang my praises, and our love. Zaliza accompanied her with her voice, as well as the other slaves ; but at hearing a couplet in praise of my fidelity, she affected to drop her lute with a
seeming

seeming emotion of impatience, and did not take it up again.

"Why," said my wife to her, "have you dropped your lute?"—"Because," replied Zaliza, "I cannot endure to hear of the fidelity of man, for I do not believe that it exists. Halechalbé," continued she, "is very amiable, and no doubt loves you: But, who would not love you? His tenderness, however, is not equal to yours: I do not believe him more faithful than others; and I can give you proofs."

"These perfidious words excited jealous suspicions in my wife's heart. However, she would not suffer me to perceive so much. I returned, as had been agreed between us, to my father, and my business; and when I came back to my wife, I met with the same tender and obliging reception as formerly.

"As I was one day in my shop, two hours before the time at which I expected my old woman to appear, a public crier in the street, announced a golden censer, ornamented with diamonds, to be sold for two thousand sequins. I sent a slave to call the crier. "To whom belongs this censer?" said I.—"To a young lady," replied he, "who is there;" pointing to a woman who was well-shaped and elegantly dressed. "Ask her to speak to me," returned I.

"The woman took the censer out of the hands of the crier, paid him for his trouble, and came up to me. "Madam," said I, "since this censer is yours, I know where to place it; will you favour me with it?"—"Since you like it, Halechalbé," said the lady, "it is yours; and I will have no money for it."—"I am not," replied I,

"in

"in use to make such bargains."—"Nor I," said the lady, "to receive a price for a present, which I wish to make to the most amiable, and the most beloved of men."

"Halechalbé," continued she, "I have for a long time frequented your shop. Alas! you have never noticed me; but your figure and your manners have enchanted me, and continue to enchant me still more and more. I think myself but too happy, that I can present you with this censer, since you have a fancy for it."—"I receive it," said I, "Madam; but you must accept from me its value in return."

"Silver or gold," answered she, "cannot represent its value to me. My love for you, breaks my rest. Treat me not with severity; it would be no disgrace to you to return my passion. Thank heaven, I have some reason to be proud of my birth, slighted as I am by you. If I may not aspire to the last expressions of tenderness, give me but one kiss, and the censer is yours."

"I cannot, Madam," replied I, "consent that you should make so bad a bargain. Take your money, or keep your censer; a kiss is no fair price."

"A kiss," replied the lady, "is inestimable to one dying for love. I did not bring this censer hither, to sell it, but to give it to you; take it at that price, and save my life."

"O! venerable dervise, I must acknowledge my weakness; I was enticed by this fond language, and those praises. Having no suspicion; not discerning the lady's features through her veil; overcome by my own self-love, no less than by her solicitations; I retired with her to a dark corner in my shop, and presented my cheek.

Instead

Instead of a kiss, she bit me violently, so that I cried aloud. She then ran off, leaving me alone with the censer in my hand, my cheek bloody, and my countenance disfigured.

“ I at last stopped the bleeding, but I could not allay the swelling, or remove the marks of the bite. Just then, the old woman came to find me, and seemed surprised at the condition in which she saw me. I contrived to tell her, that I had fallen upon cut glass, and prepared to amuse my wife with the same story; but the treacherous Zaliza had been before me. It was she who had played me that wicked trick, of which she had no doubt given my wife such an account, as to make me appear much more guilty than I really was. When I arrived at the palace, instead of being received with tender fondness as formerly, I found myself in the hands of an angry and implacable judge.

“ What has hurt your cheek ?” asked my wife, as soon as she saw me.—I began to mention the broken glass.—“ Whence is that censer you have in your hands ?”—“ It cost me two thousand sequins,” answered I, stammering.—“ Liar that thou art, it cost thee much more,” replied my wife, while her eyes sparkled with rage: “ Thou paidst for it with thy cheek. How, base man! thou hast made a sale of thy favours; but thine infamous conduct shall cost thee dear. Morigen,” said she, addressing her first eunuch, “ cut off his head.”

“ Morigen had already taken hold of me, when the old woman, our confident, came and threw herself at my wife’s feet. “ Ah! Madam,” said she, “ be not guilty of such a crime! Do

not expose yourself to suffer a degree of remorse which you could not bear."

"The earnestness of the old woman brought my wife to reason; she seemed to muse for a moment, and then ordered me to be bastinadoed. While Morigen was executing this rigid order, the painful effects of which I endeavoured to bear without complaint, she took a theorbo, and, striking an air in which the rage of jealousy and the malignant satisfaction of revenge were jointly expressed, immediately composed and sung the following couplet:

*Since my swain unfaithful proves,
Let him go to her he loves;
Let her charm his fickle heart;
Scorned from me he shall depart.
Yes, let the treach'rous rover fly,
But let him rue his perfidy.*

"The pain I felt, hindered me from hearing more. I had absolutely lost all sense; and, when I recovered, found myself in my father's house, upon a bed, with my relations standing round me, and the sons of art assiduously endeavouring to give me ease. I had been carried, after my punishment was inflicted, to my father's threshold; and those who brought me, had knocked at the door as they went away. I remained forty days, before recovering from the effects of the treatment I had suffered. At the end of that time, when I was able to rise, my father asked an explanation. I related the whole of my late adventure, without concealing a single circumstance. "Ah! heavens!" said he, "you are married to a monster of injustice and barbarity."

"Softly,

"Softly, father," cried I; "my wife was cruel, I allow; but she believed that she had reason. I had failed of my duty to her, even while she was lavishing her tenderness and favours upon me. Still, however, I adore her. My love is increased by the consciousness of my fault, and my despair of ever seeing her again. Ah! would heaven that I were but the meanest of her slaves!"

"Your sentiments," replied my father, "are unbecoming a man. Shew a better sense of the dignity of your sex. I cannot conceive to what sort of a being you have been united by the ceremony of a contract. I should suppose her to be altogether some imaginary existence, had she not given us such substantial proofs of her reality, especially in the last instance. It is a shame for a man of your birth, who may aspire to the alliance of the first families of Bagdad, to have been so transported by an idle passion, as to enter into so whimsical and unequal a connection. Forget your Fury."

"Every word my father said, while he thus inveighed against my marriage, and my wife, was a dagger to my heart.

"I shall one day discover the odious creature," said he: "I shall accuse her to the Caliph, who will not fail to put it out of her power to ensnare new victims."

"Instead of taking it kindly in my father, that he espoused my cause so warmly, my heart was shocked at his ideas of vengeance; and was divided between him, and my cruel, but still charming wife.

"Notwithstanding all that medicine could do, my health declined, and even my understanding

was deranged, by the painful feelings in my breast. I became melancholy, peevish, impatient. I refused all consolation. I scorned my too tender mother, and became a plague upon the servants; they could prepare nothing to my liking; nothing so well, but that I still cursed the awkwardness of the cooks.

"One of these came one day before me to justify himself. "Hold," said I, "turning over the table, and trampling all the dishes under foot, "see how I value thy zeal and thy address." He offered to reply; but I threw myself upon him, and beat him. His cries and howlings brought in my mother: She endeavoured to rescue the object of my resentment out of my hands. She went so far, as to add a few blows to her reproofs. In my extravagance and infatuation, I had the unhappiness to strike her. My father came in, and received no better treatment. At last I was brought under, and put in chains. I remember that I put my hand on my mouth, and found it covered with foam; in a word, I lost all sense; and, when I revived, found myself in this sad confinement where you now see me. I then learned, that I was detained here by order of the grand vizier Giafar.

"Many months have now passed, since I was sent to this disgraceful confinement. The solitude of the place, and, more than any thing else, my being here at liberty to give up my heart to my passion, unhappy as it is, without being disturbed by any bitter exclamations against her whom I shall love through life, have restored my peace of mind.

"Here! O respectable dervise, I am oppressed by a gloom of spirit, but never by any awkwardness

wardness of humour. I find, however, nothing in myself to justify my detention here. Alas! it should seem that my relations have forgotten me. But the grand vizier ought to have inquired into circumstances, since it is by his orders I am confined; and to have endeavoured to reconcile my parents to me; since it was only in a momentary transport of foolish passion, that I offended them; and since I have recovered my reason, so far, as to be able to go about the ordinary business of life.

“Such, O venerable dervise! is my story. All my consolation is the Koran, which you see in my hands; and my hope, that the Commander of the Faithful, who is at pains to inspect every thing with his own eyes, may one day visit this sad abode. ‘This is what I ask of God, a hundred times a day. But, alas! my prayers have not yet been heard.’”

“Continue your prayers, my dear son,” resumed the Caliph: “you shall soon know their efficacy; your request will be heard.” Haroun having thus cheered the youth, returned with Giafar and Mesfrou to his palace.

“What think you,” said the prince to his comrades, “of the story we have heard? for you were near enough to hear every syllable as well as I.”

“I think,” said Giafar, “that this young man, whom I never before heard mentioned, although he blames me for his present distress, is a mere story-teller, and has amused you with a parcel of dreams or lies.”

“The whole of his story cannot be false,” rejoined the Caliph: “I command you to take measures to ascertain or disprove the truth of

what he has told : you will speak of it to me to-morrow."

Next day, the grand vizier came to inform the Caliph, what he had thought of, in order to discover how far Halechalbé's story and complaints deserved credit.

"Persons who are wrong in their minds," replied the vizier, "always vary in their tales. If your Highness will cause the young man to be brought hither; and if he shall repeat before you his long narrative, with the same train of circumstances as yesterday; it may then be proper to take farther measures for ascertaining the truth of what he tells." The vizier's advice seemed very much to the purpose, and orders were instantly given to bring Halechalbé.

When the young man appeared at the foot of the throne, the Caliph thus spoke to him:—"Halechalbé, I have been told that you were confined in the public mad-house, in consequence of a very extraordinary train of adventures. Recollect yourself fully; you may assure yourself I have the strongest desire to do justice to all my subjects; let me hear your story, without omitting a single circumstance; only, think what respect you owe to truth, and to my presence." Halechalbé, seeing the prediction of the dervise thus about to be fulfilled, and being full of the subject, began his story with proper assurance, and related the whole in the very same words as before.

Giafar was forced to agree, that what he had now again heard, bore an air of truth, the evidence of which could not be resisted. The next concern was to discover, who this too dear, and too cruel enemy of Halechalbé, might be, in order

der to do him justice. The vizier soon contrived means for making this discovery.

If he had sent for all the cadis in Bagdad, and inquired which of them had drawn out the contract; this might have made the affair too public, without answering the end he had in view: For if any one among them had abused the law, by executing so extraordinary a contract, it was not probable that he would readily confess what he had done: besides, some man might have been hired to act the part. But if Halechalbé were reconciled to his father, and the old man were persuaded to employ his son again in the management of his trade; it was likely that the old woman would soon come to pry about him, were it only out of curiosity. Spies might be so disposed, as to seize her, and she might be forced to name her mistress.—The Caliph approved the thought; and the provost of the merchants was immediately sent for. That good man, who was still unhappy for the alienation of mind under which he supposed his son to labour, was therefore greatly surprised to find him at the foot of the Caliph's throne when he himself arrived in the royal presence; and, still more, to see him honoured with the favour of Haroun. The grand vizier no sooner began to recommend a reconciliation, than the father eagerly opened his arms, and Halechalbé as fondly hastened to embrace him. Measures were then concerted for unravelling the mysterious part of the affair; and the old man readily agreed to execute the part assigned to him.

Both the father and the son were, by the Caliph's munificence, honoured with rich robes. They returned home; and Halechalbé next day opened

opened his shop, which was now as splendidly furnished as ever.

The young man, no doubt, endeavoured, by every act of submission and tender attention, to make his parents forget the causes of the dissatisfaction which he had formerly given them. His passion still retained all its influence in his heart; but he sought to dissemble its effects, and to dissipate his melancholy. He yielded to it, only at some moments, when he happened to be disengaged and alone.

Halechalbé's wife had not long enjoyed the gratification of her revenge. Her resentment gradually subsided, and she began to reproach herself for her rage and cruelty. She even became uneasy about the fate of the lover whom she had so harshly treated, although she still supposed him guilty of ingratitude and inconstancy.

Love soon resumed his empire in her heart. She strove, for some time, to repress sentiments which she durst not avow, even to herself. But silence soon became too painful; and she gave orders to the old slave, seemingly from pure motives of compassion, to inquire what was become of her unhappy husband.

"Alas! Madam," replied she, "my compassion for him long since induced me to take a secret opportunity of going to his father's house; and I learned from the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, that the poor young man's life is in danger."—"His life in danger!" replied the lady; "what an unhappy woman am I! I have occasioned the death of the only man I ever loved; the only man in the world whom I ever can love! Why can I not let him know that my life is bound up in his? But this, every thing forbids.—

bids.—Go, however, and get information of his situation and sentiments, as far as you can, without exposing my honour.” The good old woman received this information with pleasure. For some time she continued to give her mistress hopes of the restoration of her husband’s health; but her inquiries soon became absolutely vain. From the time at which Halechalbé was secretly removed to the mad-house, the neighbours could give her no farther information.

Her mistress then gave herself up to despair. That she might indulge in her grief without restraint, she excluded all but her confidant from her presence. The theorbo, with which she had formerly insulted Halechalbé’s distress, was now strung to her own complaints. She was no longer in a condition to compose verses, as she had done when gentle love or stern revenge inspired her heart. She could only utter a few unconnected words, interrupted by sighs and tears. “Alas! he flees me,” says she. “He has gone into banishment on my account!—Go, my love! Thou wilt find the tygers of the desert less inhuman than the wife of thy bosom!—Hast thou forgotten me? Thou hast indeed reason: but, to forget thee, is a consolation which I shall never feel.”

The good old woman, her confidant, went one day to continue her inquiries in the city, although she had little hope of hearing any news that might prove agreeable to her mistress. Happening, however, to pass through that quarter in which Halechalbé’s shop stood, she observed it open. She looked in, and perceived himself seated on a sofa, and seemingly absorbed in a melancholy reverie. She resolved to enter. No
sooner

sooner did she see the young man, and know him to be certainly Halechalbé, than she ran to throw herself into his arms. He, for his part, was equally eager to meet her. But, the grand vizier's spies who had already fixed their eyes upon her, here interposed, seized her, and carried her before Giafar.

Great was the vizier's surprise, to find in this woman thus brought before him, Nemana, the old governess of his own favourite daughter Zeraida. "What!" said he, "are you, whom my daughter honours with her favour, concerned in the affair of Halechalbé's marriage? Who is the woman you have married him to?"—"Oh! my prince and master," replied Nemana in great confusion, "in whose service could I be employed, unless in that of your daughter the princess Zeraida?"

Giafar was struck silent, upon learning that his daughter had married without his knowledge, and without his consent. But, knowing how greatly the Caliph had interested himself in this affair, he, instead of returning to his own palace to seek an explanation from Zeraida, went straight to the Commander of the Faithful, carrying with him Nemana, and the spies who had seized her. "O! most sage Caliph," said he, "we have found the old woman who was concerned in Halechalbé's marriage; she is at the door; and I have already questioned her. Halechalbé's wife," continued the vizier, "has only availed herself of a law enacted in the koran, in chastising her husband upon detecting him in a fault that deserved chastisement. The rights of the husband and wife are reciprocal. Halechalbé had been seduced into the embrace of a strange woman."

"You

"You seem," said Haroun to Giafar, "rather to strain the meaning of the law; you would make it very sanguinary indeed: many a head in Bagdad would be in danger, if all were indiscriminately suffered to avenge themselves whenever they happen to fancy that they have suffered injuries of this nature."

"The law," replied Giafar, "is not to be so rigidly interpreted, in respect to every married pair: But when a young woman, who, by marrying, subjects herself to all its rigour, is at the same time in a condition to require a strict compliance with it, of him to whom she surrenders her liberty, and he freely agrees to her request; surely, then, when she afterwards finds occasion to revenge herself,—in so doing she only uses a fair and lawful right."

"Hitherto," said Haroun, "notwithstanding your specious reasons, I find myself inclined to favour the unfortunate Halechalbé. All that I farther want, is to know, who the woman may be, whose cause you plead with so much zeal."

"She is my own daughter," replied the vizier, with some degree of embarrassment.—"You have cleared up all now," replied the Caliph. "I perceive that the train of my affairs obliges you to neglect your own. You know not what goes on in your own house. Marriages are contracted there, and matters of life and death disposed of, without your having any idea that such things are passing under your roof. You cannot but be sensible, what a serious evil it would be, to leave the execution of a harsh law to a hand thus guided by passion. I know that women who contract unequal marriages, arrogate high privileges to themselves. When political arrangements oblige

a lady to give her hand to an inferior, she may indeed avail herself of those to a certain length; they afford some compensation for the sacrifice she makes: but your daughter, Zeraida, has only gratified her own inclination; and the provost of the merchants' son has thus become in all respects her equal. He loves her even to adoration, notwithstanding all her cruelty: will she not be too happy to receive him again for her husband? You are not ignorant, that, by one glance of my eye, I can exalt the meanest of my subjects to the rank of a prince. In justice to the father of Halechalbé, I shall raise him to higher honours; and I shall take care of the son's fortune, in respect to his relation, both to him, and to you. Inquire the name of the *cadi* who executed the contract, and question him why he did so without your consent; and, inasmuch as, without it, the marriage act would be void, do you take care that nothing be wanting to its completion in due form."

The Caliph having thus spoken to his grand vizier, made Halechalbé draw near. "Young man," said he, "your wife shall be restored; and you may either punish, or pardon her, as you please. She is daughter to my grand vizier: but let not this, nor any other consideration, restrain you from following the emotions of your own heart, and the dictates of your mind with respect to her."

"Oh! Commander of the Faithful," cried young Halechalbé, "can I retain resentment against her whom I love more than my own existence? Only to see her again, is all the happiness to which I aspire; if I can regain her heart with her father's consent, I vow to both, the
fondest

fondest love, and the most respectful duty for life."

"Giafar," resumed the Caliph, "I recommend to you the interests of your daughter and son-in-law. From this day forward, you are to look upon him as a person engaged in my service, concerning whom I have particular views."

The grand vizier returned to his palace, leading Halechalbé by the hand, while the old woman followed, who, when she found herself at liberty, stole away to give her mistress previous notice of the visit which she was about to receive. The vizier was not far behind her. Zeraida rose, as he entered, to receive him with the usual expressions of attachment and respect. He stayed her by a stern look, and a motion with his hand: "Give me none of these empty expressions," said Giafar; "there can be no love where there is no confidence; no respect, joined with disobedience. You have married without my consent, and, in a transport of passion, you have abused that authority over the servants of your household, with which I had intrusted you, and have gone into the most blameable excess of severity against your husband, the criminality of which has exposed you to the resentment of the Caliph."

"When you gave your hand," continued the vizier, "to the son of the Provost of the merchants of Bagdad, a respectable man, esteemed by all the world, and favoured by the Caliph, did you suppose that you might act as if you had united yourself to a low slave? And, if respect be due, even to the life of a slave, how could you think yourself at liberty to dispose capriciously of your husband's life? I restore you to

him; he is your master, and may, in his turn, dispose of your life. Kneel at his feet; and think, that you can regain my esteem, only by making him forget, through your submission, the unworthy and cruel treatment he has received from you."

While the vizier spoke, Zeraida trembled, and would have fallen dead at his feet, had she not perceived, in the eyes of Halechalbé, much more than compassion for the state of confusion to which he saw her reduced. She made no difficulty of falling at his feet, and kissed them with transport. The young husband, who now saw his happiness complete, raised Zeraida, embraced her, and, for a few moments, they mingled their tears together. This melting scene affected Giafar, who was passionately fond of his daughter; the sternness of the father and the minister, gave place to the relenting softness of gentle affection. It was, however, necessary to call the *cadi*, in order to redress the irregularity of the marriage. He learned that his name was Yalleddin, and sent for him immediately.

Yalleddin came; and without giving Giafar time to ask why he had consented to marry Zeraida secretly, and without her father's consent, instantly addressed him as follows: "Your daughter sent for me, and acquainted me with the ardour of her passion. I therefore thought it my duty to agree to her request, in order to preserve her, although, by an act of irregularity on my part, from conduct still more irregular. She proposed that I should act as her guardian. In this character, which I accepted, and not disapproving of her choice, I considered myself as doing an essential service to this engaging couple,

ple, and foresaw that you would one day approve of what I did."

Giafar, far from expressing dissatisfaction with the cadi, politely testified his gratitude for so kind a service. But he ordered the slave Zaliza to be delivered into his hands, that he might inflict just punishment upon her, after she should first be drawn into a confession of the base stratagem which she had contrived, to divide the married pair. This he left to themselves, after assuring Halechalbé, that he should be no less dear to him, than if he had been his own son. He then gave sumptuous entertainments, in order to confer all possible eclat upon a marriage which was authorised and relished by the Caliph, and was matter of joy to all the inhabitants of Bagdad.

Thus Halechalbé passed, in an unexpected manner, from the mad-house, to the high honours to which he was elevated by Haroun Al-raschid; from a situation of horror, to the highest pitch of happiness.

Schahriar, perceiving that the story of Halechalbé was ended, testified the pleasure which it had given him, and praised the conduct of the Caliph. He expressed himself, with some vehemence, against the abuse which women ever made of any small degree of authority that might be intrusted in their hands. Scheherazade was too prudent, to offer direct opposition to what he said; but contrived an artifice to weaken its force, and to shew that his observations were rather too general. "Sire," said she, "I might still continue to entertain your Majesty with the memorable adventures of the great Ca-

liph Haroun, and his family. I know other incidents which happened to him when he was advanced in life, and which exhibit a beautiful prospect of this sun of justice and prudence, diffusing with softened lustre his setting rays. But these are long; and I must first recollect them with leisure; for they are equally extraordinary and interesting. In the mean time, if your Majesty will condescend, as the great Haroun himself used to do, to amuse yourself with a short popular story, which was once very much a favourite with the common people, I shall relate that of Xailoun, surnamed the Idiot. It is still proverbial at Bagdad, where it is daily repeated among the common people."

The Sultan, believing that such a story, related by his fair spouse, could not be otherwise than amusing, however humble the subject, asked her to begin it immediately; and Scheherazade thus proceeded.

The IDIOT; or STORY of XAILOUN.

SIRE, there lived in Bagdad a young man named Xailoun, born of creditable parents, who, when very young, was left an orphan, with some little fortune. He was of a short, thick figure, which seemed to promise a robust constitution. His features were agreeable enough, but destitute of expression. From his very infancy, his silliness of mind rendered him the constant butt of his companions. He was, at the same time, very good natured. When he had

had attained the age of puberty, his friends, believing that a sensible woman might manage him, so as to make at least an honest man of him, resolved to settle him in marriage, and gave him to wife a young woman, who was two years older than himself, and was sage, discreet, and in an equal condition of life.

Oitbha, Xailoun's wife, soon saw the defects in her husband's character. He was extremely slothful, usually sunk asleep whenever his belly was full, and only awaked to eat anew. The only exercise he ever took, was in sauntering about the city, thrusting himself into crowds, and looking at all about him, without observing any thing. This foolish indiscretion of his, involved him from time to time in little embarrassments, and he often returned home with bloody jaws, or a black eye. This mortified Oitbha. She was fond of her husband; for, excepting his gluttony, laziness, and idiot simplicity, he was a good harmless creature.

While Xailoun continued to lead this sort of life, his affairs went wrong. He ate up his little patrimony in sloth and inactivity, and sunk by degrees into absolute fatuity.

Oitbha had tried caresses, remonstrances, reprimands; but Xailoun's conduct was still the same. She wished at least to bring him to perform some little labour, that he might by degrees be put into a way of earning a livelihood; but it was impossible to make him do any thing.

At last, he was one day prevailed with, by entreaty, to go to spread out some linen to dry in the sun. Going out some time after, to see whether he had performed his task, she found him seated on the ground, and engaged in a se-

rious conversation with a *Kardouon* * which lay upon a pile of stones. Xailoun was speaking, and the little animal seemed to reply, by making its usual signal with the head. Oitbha, being quick-tempered, lost patience. She took a branch of the turpentine tree which she happened to find near, and gave Xailoun three or four blows. He looked up with an air of stupid good nature, and went to gather up, and spread out the linens.

Upon this, Oitbha made her reflections. We have a rising family. The labour of a single woman cannot be sufficient to earn subsistence for my children, and for this great lazy fellow, at the same time. Since I can make him fear me, I must correct these sluggish habits of his. He is strong; I shall oblige him to work for bread to himself.

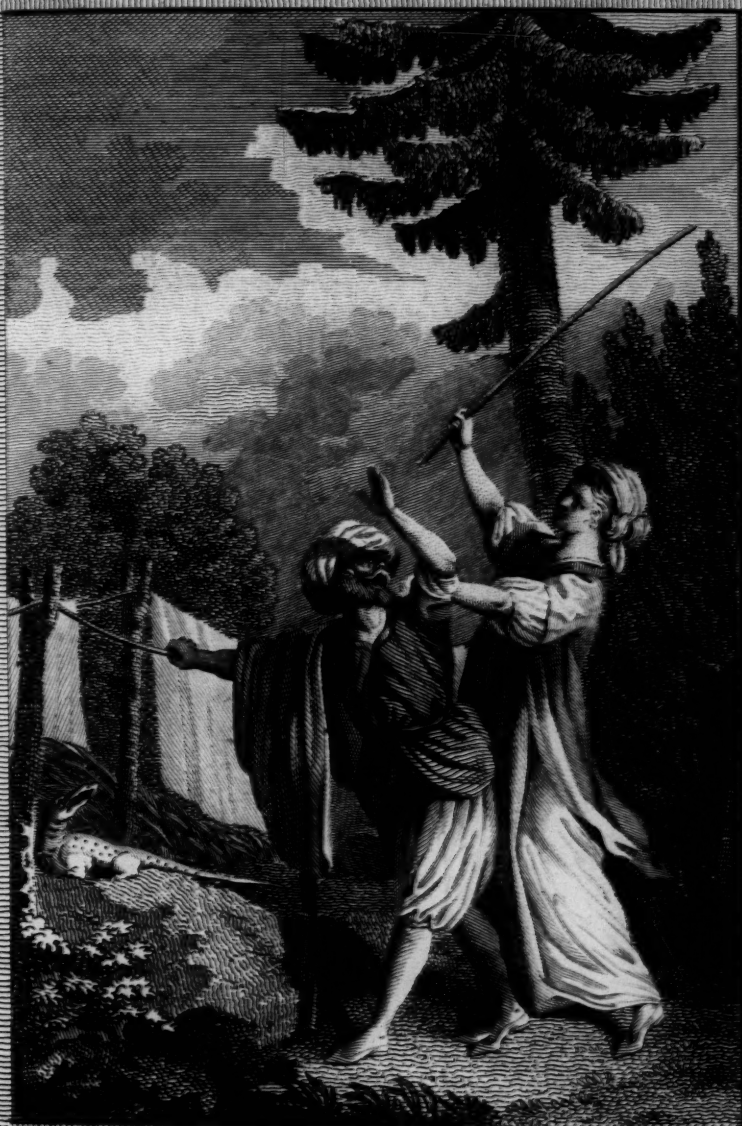
Oitbha, having thus reasoned with herself, took the rod in her hand when Xailoun returned into the house, and endeavoured to make him derange, and place in order again, the few moveables they had. If he stopped but for a moment, blows rained hard upon his shoulders.

Xailoun obeyed. But no sooner was his task finished, than he stole away to stroll through Bagdad, and did not return till it was very late, and then in an uncomfortable pickle.

Oitbha saw that the branch of the turpentine tree was too slender a weapon to establish her authority; she therefore took up a staff.

“Whence comest thou?” said she; “I will teach thee to go out without my leave, and to get

* A small animal fourteen inches long, in form resembling the crocodile of the Nile. When a person looks upon it, it moves its head up and down, with a motion like that by which we express consent. It is harmless.



What is the Hardouon to you?

get thyself threshed as thou hast been." So saying, she gave him twenty blows with the staff, well laid upon his shoulders; made him sit down, and then dressed the wounds which he had received on his hands and face. When this was done, she put him to bed. "Rest there," said she; "to-morrow we shall see another thing; thou must absolutely change, thou great idiot that thou art, otherwise we shall all die of grief and hunger. Thou hast need to work for thy living, and thou must do it. Thou art great and strong; thou must go seek work at Bagdad, and if thou dost not bring thy wages home, the staff shall do its duty."

Xailoun fell asleep in a very melancholy mood, saying to himself, "Unless I change, I must feel the weight of the staff; and how shall I change, and be no longer Xailoun?"

Next day, Oitbha saw that her husband's face still retained too strong impressions of the blows which he had received on the preceding evening. She dressed his wounds, and said, "Thou mayest muse, thou booby thou; but resolve to change thyself entirely."

When the marks of the ill usage which he had suffered, were entirely effaced, his wife made him rise. "Get out of the house," said she to him; "go, hire thyself by the day to work to some master in Bagdad; here is no bread for thee; and if thou returnest without bringing food for us, thou shalt feel the staff. Such shall every day be thy reception, till thou art entirely changed."

Xailoun's head was not formed to retain more than the last words of this speech. It was requisite that he should bring bread, and should return.

turn a changed man; otherwise, the little sensibility that still remained in his shoulders, reminded him, that he should be received with blows of the staff. He passed by a baker's door just as the bread was taken out of the oven, and was set out to cool in the tent. Its colour, form, and smell moved his appetite. It was now winter; and the day being cold, the heat from the oven was another inducement to him; for he was scantily clad.

The baker, a fat man, with a ruddy face, sat beside his oven, and had a very thriving appearance. The boys who wrought at the kneading-trough, were neatly clad, and seemed to be merry, healthy, and happy.

"Oh!" said Xailoun, "if I might but enter this shop, my business were done: here is the bread I was bidden to go seek for myself. Might I only eat, for eight days, enough of such excellent bread, I should become fat and ruddy like these folks, and should be entirely changed."

After this reflection, he entered the shop. The baker looked upon him, and, seeing his sturdy appearance, supposed that he might be a day-labourer wanting work. He accordingly asked him, "What wouldst thou have, friend? Dost thou want employment? Wilt thou assist me in my work?"

"Most willingly," said Xailoun.—"Take up that hedge-bill, then; untie this faggot; cut the branches, and give me them as I shall need them, to put in my oven."

Xailoun began, and did his work. The hour of dinner came; and he received one of those loaves which had so excited his appetite. The baker, learning that his new servant had a wife and

and children, gave him three other loaves for them; and thus sent him away happy when night came.

Oitbha received him very kindly: and, when she knew what he had done; "Thou see'st," said she, "that by working thou can'st earn thy bread. Resolve upon labouring all the days of thy life, and change thyself entirely."

Next day, Xailoun would have slept rather late in the morning; but Oitbha awakened him with a rod. "Come," said she, "go to the shop, or I must take the staff." Xailoun put on his clothes, and set quickly away. "Ah!" said he, "when shall I be so changed, that the rod may no longer be mentioned to me?"—so saying, he resumed his work. He went on thus for eight days; and, in this time, the little house was plentifully stocked with the necessary provisions. Every morning he was roused by reproaches, and sometimes by blows of the staff, whenever he shewed any inclination to relapse into laziness.

But Xailoun no longer found the bread so good as it had been the first day. He could not have been changed, since his wife still scolded and beat him every morning; and it seemed hard to him, who was so fond of strolling about through Bagdad, to be confined all day by the mouth of an oven, and to be, at the same time, forced to get up so early in the morning. He concluded with himself, that a change of this sort signified nothing, and that he must seek a change of another sort.

His wife waked him in the morning by the usual expedient. "Get up quickly," said she; "go, work for thy living, and bring something home

home to the house ; otherwise I shall certainly beat thee. We shall not live together as husband and wife, till thou art changed.”—“ Very good this,” muttered Xailoun between his teeth : “ I am already changed into a prisoner : but this change does not agree with me ; I must look out elsewhere.” He accordingly strayed through Bagdad, without knowing very well what he was in search of. Thus strolling about, he happened to pass near the shop of Seydi-Hassan, a native of Damascus, and the most famous cook in all Bagdad. It had a handsome appearance, and was situate on the banks of the Aggiala. In the tent before the house, was a large bason filled with rice, heaped up in a pyramidal form, seasoned with rich spices, and having minced meat around it,—the whole prepared with equal neatness and delicacy. The rich steams which these good things exhaled, excited Xailoun’s appetite.

In the same shop, he saw six young men busily employed, all of whom were wonderfully well dressed, ravishingly handsome, apparently very merry, and in good case. It seemed nowise extraordinary, that folks who had pilau at discretion, and that so good as what he saw before him, should be so gay and jolly. He therefore conceived, that, if he were to live with them, he might soon come to resemble them. But it was necessary that he should address himself to the cook, in order to obtain employment in his shop. Hunger, and the desire of change, rendered Xailoun eloquent. “ Have you any work that you can employ me in ?” said he to Seydi-Hassan.”—“ There is no lack of work there,” said the cook ; “ go to my boys there ; they will give you something to do in an instant.” Thus

was

was Xailoun set to work without delay. He dined upon the remains of different dishes which were given him, in great plenty. He ate, and ate again, till he had stuffed himself most gluttonously; making no doubt, that he had at last found the only means of accomplishing the change to which he aspired. After dinner, he resumed his labour. It was not hard. His task was, to cover the tables for persons who came in to eat, to wait upon the guests, to bear dishes backwards and forwards, and to clear the tables when they went away.

In the evening, he returned home with a heap of broken meat upon a large plate. It was late when he returned, and Oitbha had become uneasy. When she saw him come in without the bread which he had used to receive from his master the baker, but with this new cargo of provisions, she immediately conjectured that he had been running about the city in his old way, and had stolen the plate with what was on it.

“Where hast thou been, vagabond? Whence hast thou taken that plate, thou thief?” Such was the language with which she first accosted him; and this was accompanied with a few blows of the staff, well laid on. Xailoun endeavoured to let her know, that finding himself unable to endure longer confinement by the mouth of an oven, he had desired to change for something better, and had gone to work with Seydi-Hassan.

“They cannot have given thee all that,” replied Oitbha: “Come with me; we must not be looked upon as thieves.” So saying, she took her veil, made Xailoun follow her with the plate in his hands, and hastened to the cook’s house.

Seydi,

Seydi, astonished at such honesty, added several other presents of the same sort to what Xailoun had before received, and sent the good folks home very happy. Xailoun, for some time, went contentedly every day to Seydi's house, ate his fill, and every evening brought home enough for the support of his family. When he rose in the morning, he received neither blows nor reprimands; but when he failed to rise, he was sure of suffering both the one and the other. He had taken it into his head, that he must undergo such a change, that his wife should no longer know him. In this hope, he ate as much as he could, in order that he might become plump and ruddy like his fellow-servants; and would often go to view himself in a looking-glass which was in the shop, to see whether he was not growing bigger.

Seydi-Haffan, one day, observing his assiduities at the looking-glass, asked what he meant? "I look to see if I be changed," replied Xailoun; he then touched alternately his face and his clothes, and expressed his dissatisfaction by shrugging his shoulders. "Wouldst thou change?" said Seydi.—"Yes," said Xailoun.—"Thou mayest change, if thou wilt," replied the cook; "the turnspit is dead; thou mayest have his place."—"Shall I have his clothes too?" said Xailoun.—"To be sure," replied Seydi.—"Change, when you please," said Xailoun: "It has long been my daily prayer to God, that he would change me."

It afforded some diversion to the servants in the shop, to dress the scullion in his new clothes. He himself was overjoyed to think that he was
going

going to be changed, and would soon resemble the other servants of Seydi Hassan.

The smell alone might have convinced him that he had made no advantageous change; but he could not follow out more than one idea at once. Thus covered over with grease from head to foot, and wearing a dirty apron, he was sent to scour the plates and kettles. For want of dexterity and practice, he bedawbed and blackened his face and hands, almost as soon as he began his work.

They brought him plenty to eat, and he then acquitted himself wonderfully well. They gave him new work to perform; and he hastened to have done with it, that he might go and survey himself in the looking-glass. He was terrified at the figure he now made. He fled out of the shop, crying, "My God, my God, I desired to be changed, but not into either a prisoner or a scullion. However," said he, "this change might hinder my wife from knowing, and beating me. Let me be gone."

He ran straight to his own door, empty-handed. Oitbha saw the hideous figure come in, and took up the staff to defend herself, and drive him away. By the voice and beard, she soon knew it to be Xailoun; but she, then, only laid on the better; and with so much the more reason, as she had nothing for supper, and he had brought no eatables with him. Oitbha put him to bed, and bore the scullion's dress back to Seydi. She there learned the circumstances of her husband's metamorphosis. She returned home in ill humour. If Xailoun did not choose to go back to the cook, he was to be sent next day to seek out another master, from whom he might expect still more

rigorous treatment; otherwise he should not have even straw to ly upon.

Xailoun set once more out, and wandered through the streets of Bagdad, in search of work, and of a change. Nearby one of the principal mosques, he observed a pastry-shop. Here was still greater neatness, than in the eating-house in which he had lately served. Those who wrought the paste, having their arms bare up to the elbows, exposed a fine shew of white, fresh, and plump flesh, such as Xailoun wished to have himself. The juicy dishes of pastry, to which they owed this hale, yet delicate appearance, were displayed in the tent before the door. They exhaled an odour sufficient to prompt the appetite, even of a man who had been accustomed to fare better than Xailoun. He imagined that if he could fill his belly here for some time, and employ his hands among that luscious pastry, his appearance would be entirely changed. He therefore entered the shop, and very simply offered his services to the pastry-cook. *He* rather looked at him, than listened to him. The vigour of his constitution, which appeared from the exterior conformation of his body, gave an idea of him, as a man who might do a great deal of work. His services were therefore immediately accepted, to his great satisfaction. The work required of him was easy. He ate as much as he could hold of that excellent pastry; and, in the evening, carried home some good morsels to his wife.

Oitbha was surprised to see him return with his wages in that specie. "The reason is, that I am changed," said Xailoun; and then went on to acquaint her, that he had engaged in a new trade. Oitbha was content, since he continued

to work ; and her husband was at the height of his wishes ; for he had not as yet been suffered to put his hands to the paste ; but it being now the month of Ramadan, he was sent out, every morning, with pastry, to sell in the streets and squares. They had taught him to distinguish coins. He knew that he was to bring back the same number of pieces of money, that he gave away of tarts ; and he was accordingly careful to give a just account. This was the utmost length to which his abilities could go ; and this was all that his master, as yet, required of him. But the time came, when trial was to be made of him in a task of a higher nature. The festival gave the pastry-cook and the servants more to do than usual. They began to want meal, because the ass that had turned the mill was dead. Xailoun had not yet been nearly so serviceable as this animal. His master said to him, " We are almost without meal, and shall consequently want pyes. I have lost my labourer, and cannot, for these some days yet, procure another. Thou must change thy occupation, Xailoun, and make meal for me ; I shall take care of thee while thou art at work."—" Let me only change," said the other ; " it was to change I came here. But shall I change my clothes too ?"—" Well thought on," replied the master : " When thou dost the work of my dead servant, thou must assume his dress, to be sure." Xailoun was happy to hear this.—" At last," said he to himself, " I shall be really changed." He was led to the mill-house ; his eyes were blinded, and harness put upon his shoulders ; and he was then bound by the arms. " Come," said the pastry-cook, " march, march ; pull the collar, and this will move of course."

Xailoun made an effort, and the mill was moved. The work became a little less awkward, but was still very severe. "Is it done?" cried Xailoun, new to the trade.—"No, no," replied the pastry-cook; "go on, go on; thou dost very well; the meal is good, and thou shalt have enough of it to sift."

"To sift!" said Xailoun; "this must be another change. So much the better; the present is not good." By this time, he was blowing, and all in a sweat. The pastry-cook called to him to move on, and gave him not a moment's relaxation till dinner-time came. He was then loosed, led out, and had his eyes uncovered. Food was to be given him next. But he was not now allowed to feed upon the pastry. It was necessary that he should have more solid eatables, to fit him for his work; and a dish of turkey-beans and onions, dressed with lintseed-oil, was accordingly set before him. He did not dislike the change in general, but still hoped to find his account in it. But the beans had husks, and the oil affected his throat disagreeably. He was dying of hunger, however; and there was a necessity for his eating. Hardly had he done, when means to enable him to digest this unpleasant meal, were again proposed to him.

"Come, Xailoun," said the pastry-cook, "we must go on with grinding, otherwise the shop may be shut up to-morrow." One blinded poor Xailoun; another put on the harness; and thus was he yoked again in the mill. Having his belly full, and swelled with wind by the nature of the food he had taken, and being still fatigued from the effect of the morning's labour, he was soon puffing.

puffing, and all in a sweat, and stood still from time to time.

"Come, then," cried the cook; "march! if thy courage fail, I must inspire thee, as I did thy predecessor." "Courage!" said Xailoun to himself: "what can this courage be? I should perhaps be the better for it." He stopped upon this, and uncovered his eyes, to see what they were going to give him. When he looked, he saw his master with a whip in his hand, which he was cracking in the air. No more was needed, to make him cover his eyes again, and go on with his work, without requiring any farther solicitation. He had seen enough to disgust him with courage, before he tried it. The work was at length at an end. Xailoun was loosened from the yoke. He eagerly uncovered his eyes, went into the shop, and, finding the door open, made out, and ran straight home, all mealy and harneſſed as he was, with the ſwiftness of an arrow; dreading, every moment, that the mill-post and courage would overtake him.

It may be eaſily conceived, that a man with a great beard, and covered all over with meal, ſo that the girths with which he was harneſſed ſeemed to be of one piece with his clothes, could not be other than a very ſtrange figure. When Oitbha ſaw the ſpectre come in, and ſit down with confidence beſide her, ſhe was at firſt aſfrighted; but ſhe ſoon knew by his carriage who he was. "What!" ſaid ſhe, "is it thou, great fool? Where haſt thou been to get thyſelf harneſſed in this manner, inſtead of working with thy maſter to earn our ſuſtenance?" With this, ſhe took up her ſtaff, and duſted his jacket. Xailoun ſtrove to calm the ſtorm. "You bade

me pray to God to change me. I have done so. I have been a prisoner, a scullion, and am now a mill-afs."

"Oh! thou great beast!" said Oitbha, while pity induced her to cease from correcting him. She relieved him from his girths, shut the door upon him, carried the harness back to the pastry-cook, and, reproaching him for having so abused a poor man's simplicity, made him give up Xailoun's upper garment, with the wages for his day's labour, and returned home.

The fatigue which he had undergone, the blows which he had received, and his indigestion from the ragout with the lintseed-oil, kept Xailoun a-bed all the next day; nor did his wife press him to rise. But on the third day, being herself constrained by necessity, she was obliged to send out her sluggard of a husband to work.

"Come," said she, "thou must do thy duty. Return to any one of thy masters who will have thee; but if thou dost not bring home some fruits of thy labour, thou must go ly in the street. Change thy conduct. As for me, I will never change."

"Change my conduct!" said Xailoun to himself; "I would fain know how that can come about. When I go out into the street, for instance, I may pass this way, or that way, but I am still conducted to the river. Let me see; if I were to conduct myself in the country, instead of conducting myself in the town, I might perhaps do better. I daily ask of God to change me; but they make so much noise on the streets of Bagdad, that he cannot hear me; but when I am in the open country, he must hear, if he be not perfectly deaf."

Xailoun

Xailoun accordingly left the city, to say his prayers in the country, in full assurance, that he might have enough of room, open southward* of him, when he was there.

At some distance from the city, a very wide door standing open, invited him to enter a large garden. He saw on all sides, pear trees, plumb trees, pomegranate trees,—in short, fruit trees of all different sorts, bending under the fruits with which they were loaded. This place seemed to him the terrestrial paradise. He was very fond of fruits, but had never eaten them at his will. This threw him into an ecstasy.

“Here,” said he, “is good feeding for a man. I remember, that when my wife bought our asf, she was lean and mangy. “I must put her to a good pasture,” said my wife. She did so; and, within fifteen days, the beast was so changed, that I did not know her again. I am made up of flesh and bones as well as she; and if I could only stay here, the same thing must happen to me.”

“The man to whom these fruits belong, cannot eat them all, surely. He will give me what I wish; and I shall then change, as did our asf. I shall not know myself again; for I am persuaded, that if she had looked on herself in a glass, she could not have known herself again.”

After these reflections, Xailoun advanced farther into the garden, and went forward, till he reached the place where the proprietor was mounted on a pomegranate tree, and throwing down pomegranates to his wife, which she put into a basket as she received them. Xailoun offered

* The Musulmans turn to the south, when they say their prayers.

ferred his services. The gardener, looking upon his wife, made a sign to her, upon which she accepted them. They made him climb up an apple tree, of which he gathered the fruit; not without eating, at first, almost as many as he gathered. The proprietor did not forbid him. He agreed to give him a small sum, as monthly wages, for doing such work as they might have occasion to employ him in. As to the sum, he understood nothing. The work, he supposed to be the gathering of pears, apricots, and other fruits, which he might eat at his leisure. He agreed, therefore, to all. They gave him some little things to do within the house, such as he had been accustomed to when in the service of the cook and the pye-baker.. For dinner and supper, he ate pilau with his master; all the day he stuffed himself with fruits, and was fully persuaded that he should soon be as entirely changed as his ass. He was sent from time to time to Bagdad, with two asses before him loaded with fruits. The animals knew the way, so that Xailoun had not even the trouble of driving them.

In the mean time, Oitbha lay in, and of consequence could not take any trouble in seeking her husband. Xailoun had not forgotten her: But he expected such happy effects from his present mode of living, that he was induced to wait till he should be entirely changed, before he would visit her. Unluckily, however, there was no mirror in his master's house, in which he might observe the progress of his transformation. But the present satisfaction and hopes of Xailoun, were to have an end. His master had two bulls which he employed in the work
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of his farm. Xailoun led them out to the water every day. They were familiar with him, and he called them his companions. It happened one day, by chance, or perhaps by the fault of the leader, that one of the bulls fell into a ditch, and broke his neck. The gardener was angry; the work of his farm must be done; and he could not furnish himself with another, till the next fair. He therefore addressed Xailoun. "Well! thou hast lost me one of my cattle; I cannot provide myself with another for some time. That the work may be done, however, thou must change thy employment with me."—"Change!" replied Xailoun; "this is what I daily ask of God; it was for this he brought me here, I suppose."—"In this case, since thou art so willing, thou must assist thy surviving companion to plough the remainder of my field." Xailoun had never gone out of the garden, and knew not what ploughing meant. He disliked his tattered clothes. "Will you give me new clothes, then?" said he to his master.—"Thou shalt have a full suit," replied the gardener, "from head to foot, my friend, in order that thou mayest be more comfortable."—"In this case," said Xailoun, "I shall instantly lay aside that which I now wear." "No," replied his master, "that which I am going to give thee, may very well be worn above the other." Two suits of clothes, one above another, seemed to Xailoun an undoubted change: he determined, therefore, that he would go shew himself to his wife in his new garb. The heat was at that time excessive, and flies and other insects were extremely troublesome to the cattle. The gardener took up half a dozen of goat-skins to cover
Xailoun

Xailoun from head to foot, leaving him only holes through which he might see and breathe. All the rest of his body was covered up. The idiot looked foolishly on; and, in his eagerness for change, quietly suffered the gardener to do what he had a mind to. He was, immediately after, yoked to the plough; and the gardener, cracking his whip, obliged him to move on, and do the duty of an ox. When Xailoun heard the whip crack; although much less strong than a bullock, he would have found strength. He drew on his companion. But, in the course of the work, the flies made cruel work upon both. Wherever they could make their way to Xailoun's back, they treated him very harshly.

They were at length unyoked for dinner. Had Xailoun durst, he would have deserted; but he dreaded the whip which the gardener kept beside him. His master bade him eat. His hunger bade the same thing: But he was soon again bound in the yoke. When evening came, they left their work. The gardener led his bull to the stall. Xailoun took advantage of the opportunity, gained the door, and fled in all haste to Bagdad, still wearing the skins, which were either bound down by the harness, or sewed about him. He durst not look behind; such was his fear of being pursued, and of feeling the lash of the whip. It was night, and the gates of the city were shut. The poor fugitive had no other place to retire to, but the burying-grounds without the walls. He laid himself down in the first that offered; and there, overcome as he was with the fatigue which he had suffered through the day, he fell sound asleep. About six o'clock
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in the morning, he was suddenly awaked by the grave-diggers coming to dig a grave in the very place where he was laid. The earth had been lately removed from that spot, by wild carnivorous animals, which had scraped it away, and had torn up and devoured a carcase, the bones of which, with some part of the flesh, still lay strewed about.

While the grave-diggers were talking about the ravages of carnivorous animals, one of them maintained, that these could not dig deeper than three feet in the earth; but that such depredations were rather the doings of evil genies, who came to devour the cold remains of the dead. In the mean time, one of them perceived poor Xailoun asleep. The goat-skins which covered him, gave him so hideous an aspect, that the grave-digger cried out, "Ah! here is the evil genie." At this cry, Xailoun awakened, and sat up on his breech. It was lucky for him that an emotion of terror had seized the beholders; and he had time to rise. His enemies would have been less alarmed, if they could have read, in his looks and countenance, the terrors with which he was seized, at the sight of three iron shovels ready to knock him down; it was a sight to work a proper effect upon him. But his goat-skin mask hid the emotions which were passing under it; and while the grave-diggers stood with their arms in the air, fear gave him strength. He sprung forward like an arrow, passed through the midst of them, and made off.

Xailoun's adversaries soon recovered courage, when they saw him act so timid a part. They threw away their shovels, and ran after him, crying out, with all their might, "Here is the
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evil genie, who eats the dead in these burying-places ! Maul him ! kill him !” The people gathered, and ran after the monster, as soon as they saw him, crying out, as vigorously as fear would allow, “ The wicked genie who devours the dead !” The dogs joined in the pursuit ; but the strangeness of the animal kept them back. They followed, barking, but at some distance. The grave-diggers, finding themselves impeded by the crowd, which thickened as they advanced, drove the dogs back, and said, “ Throw stones and sticks at him !” But the idea of the power and wickedness of the genies, took away their courage. The children were afraid of being swallowed up alive, by the wicked genie who ate dead carcases.

In the mean time, the report of this appearance was spread through the whole city of Bagdad. Xailoun, in his frightful disguise, proceeded to his own house. He entered, and the crowd pressed in by the door after him. Here he was saluted by a dreadful and unavoidable shower of blows. Oitbha, who was the more intrepid, for being at this time a mother and a nurse, no sooner saw the frightful animal come in, than she took up the staff, which she knew to use with very superior dexterity ; and, while her poor husband, all panting from his race, could not even articulate his own name, drove him out of the house. He then fell into the hands of the grave-diggers, who, taking him up with all his skins about him, carried him to prison amidst the shouts of the populace ; and the news was circulated from mouth to mouth, that they were carrying to prison the wicked genie who infested the burying-places, and had entered

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ed Oitbha's house to devour her child. The jailor trembled with terror, at hearing what sort of a prisoner they were bringing him, of whom he had already heard thirty different descriptions, every one more frightful than another. This object of terror was at last presented. One of the grave-diggers had, by this time, taken off some part of Xailoun's disguise, and had discovered, that he whom they pursued with such fury, was only a man clad in goat-skins. But this made the criminal appear so much the more guilty, as having disguised himself like a beast, and gone about devouring dead bodies and little children.

"Infamous wretch!" said one of the jailor's officers to him; "Art thou possessed by the devil, to prowl about the sepulchres of faithful Musulmans, and to eat their bodies?"—"I!" said Xailoun, who was by this time entirely stripped of his mask; "I went not there to eat, but to sleep; I indeed passed among the bones, but not one of them did I take up."

All that stood by, were disconcerted, and at the same time pacified, by the simplicity of Xailoun's discourse and carriage. They put only one question to him: "But, didst not thou go into Oitbha's house to devour her child?"—"I? I would not eat my own child; I went into my own house."

Among the curious persons at the door, were three or four neighbours of Oitbha's. These heard the account which the supposed wicked genie gave of himself. They asked leave to enter, and knew Xailoun. They gave, at the same time, so authentic an account of Xailoun's stupidity and goodness of heart, that the judge, who

had by this time come to inquire into the fact, ordered Xailoun to be carried back to Oitbha with all his skins about him. The wife was informed of her husband's return, some moments before he made his appearance. She was greatly concerned to think that she had given him so bad a reception, and had occasioned his suffering still worse treatment. The ridicule of the adventure, was unavoidable. It would be known next day through all Bagdad, that Xailoun was the supposed wicked genie who devoured the dead. She also regretted, that she had given him so many blows with the staff: for, this once, she had treated him as a real enemy.

When she saw Xailoun, she was seized with compassion for him. She thanked the neighbours who had brought him back; and endeavoured to learn from him where he had been during so long an absence, and how he had been so ridiculously metamorphosed.

Xailoun, who had only one way of explaining himself, told her the reasons which had induced him to leave the city, to go in quest of a more advantageous change; and explained how he had the misfortune to have been changed into a bullock, and then, without knowing how, into a wicked genie.

Oitbha knew that he was guiltless of lying; she put him to bed, and dressed the contusions which he had received, and the inflammation he had suffered from the stings of the insects, with the greatest tenderness. She then gave him food, and considered what she should do next day.

Soon as it was light, as she might not leave her child, she put him in a basket upon the ass, and,

and, in another, upon the opposite side, the skins and harnessing belonging to the gardener. She then asked the neighbours, who had brought home her husband on the preceding evening, to accompany her to the house in the country, where Xailoun had been employed; and, putting on her veil, went along with them.

Arriving at the house of the gardener, she severely reproached him for having so abused the simplicity of a Musulman, as to humble him to the condition of a brute. She related to him, what affronts her husband had been exposed to; returned him his goat-skins and harnessing, and demanded the wages which Xailoun had earned. "Were it not for my husband's sake," said she, "I should carry you before the cadi. Think yourself happy that I am unwilling to make more noise about the affair." The gardener was confounded. He drew two sequins out of his pocket, which was four times as much as the wages he had engaged to pay Xailoun. Oitbha would have refused what was more than her just due; it was a great sum to her: but she had two of her neighbours with her, and was not ill pleased that her neighbours should believe her husband able to gain two sequins in the month. The affair thus ended, she took up Xailoun's coat, and returned home.

Five days passed without new adventures. In the interval, Xailoun recovered of his bruises. Oitbha then renewed her remonstrances, with respect to the necessity of his changing, not into a scullion, an ox, an ass, or an evil genie,—but so as to turn himself to a life of labour, for the support of his family.

As Xailoun had sold pyes through the town, she imagined that he might employ himself in selling earth for children *. She sent him therefore with the asfs to bring two baskets full of that earth, and directed him to sell it through the town, at so much for a certain measure. But, it was necessary, in order to draw customers about him, he should cry, "Earth for children! Earth for children!" This was no long speech to make: the asfs, receiving a blow from the hand of Oitbha, and Xailoun sitting astride upon the baskets, they proceeded, he crying furiously, "Earth for children." For some time, all went well; but the sound of his voice became soon more faint; the crier fell asleep, and the asfs rambled at her pleasure through the streets. She came at last to the banks of the Euphrates. She there drank at her list and leisure; after which, as her colt had been left in the stable, she returned instinctively thither, and was going in, with her burden upon her back. The door being too low, Xailoun's head struck violently against the lintel; the noise was heard within the house; and the rider being thrown down, awaked, and set to crying, "Earth for children!" while his nose was bleeding, and his forehead sorely bruised. Oitbha saw her husband come in, and suspected how matters had gone with him. She washed his nose with salt and water, and, at the same time, gave him a few blows. "Lazy wretch!" said she; "thou deservest to be beaten with a whip,

* This is a sort of red friable earth, very dry, and of an agreeable smell, which is used in Arabia. It is put under infants in the cradle, from their loins to their knees. A linen-cloth is laid upon it, and there is nothing more to separate it from the body of the child. It imbibes moisture; and prevents bad smells, and galling of the skin.

whip, like an ass. Oh! thou shalt change, or I shall give thee so many blows, as to make thee forget all that thou hast hitherto received. Go to the baker, the pastry-cook, the eating-house, or even the gardener. Go, ask work from some one of thine old masters. Any of them will take thee again; but come not back hither, without bringing something to support thee. I have no room here for a sluggard like thee." Xailoun was thus again turned out of the house, to seek his fortune. He began to suppose, that, last time, he had not gone far enough from the city, to make himself heard by God, whom he continually implored to change him. For this time, he strayed a short way out through the country, till he came to a pile of ruins, which were the remains of a palace, that had been the abode of a very great man. As he amused himself with looking at the ruins, he perceived a kardouon upon a heap of stones regularly laid together. The animal seemed to have its eyes upon him. "Ah! ah! cousin," said he, "I thought thou hadst lived in the city, and thou art here." The little animal seemed to reply by the usual beckoning of its head. "Thou knowest me well," continued Xailoun; "thou understandest me. What hinders thee to speak?" The kardouon could only answer by its usual sign. "Oh! thou makest me mad," said Xailoun; "speak, or I shall throw a stone at thee." The kardouon, waving its head, provoked the poor fool to throw the stone, upon which, the animal ran to hide itself among the ruins.

Xailoun was piqued; he thought that it was only out of malice the kardouon held its tongue; and resolved to seize it in the place to which it

had fled, and to force it to enter into conversation with him. In a quarter of an hour, he had removed the stones, and cleared the ground. The kardouon had in the mean time retreated, as fast as he could, still farther out of the way. But Xailoun was diverted from pursuing him, by a new object of curiosity which now presented itself.

While pursuing the kardouon, he remarked a square slab of black marble, having a ring fixed in it. He laid hold of the ring, made an effort, and raised the stone. He then perceived a flight of steps leading under ground. "Ah! ah!" said he, "here is my cousin's house; I must go see whether he be in it:"—so he descended upon the steps.

The light penetrating into the subterraneous apartment by the opening which he had made, enabled him to distinguish a number of urns disposed in a row near the entrance. "These," said he, "are undoubtedly the pots in which my cousin keeps his provisions. He uncovered one of them, and took out of it an handful of pieces of gold. He then went back to the mouth of the cavern, in order to examine what he had in his hand by the light. Not considering its hardness or weight, and having never before seen money of this species, he fancied the gold coins to be nothing but carrots cut in pieces, and dried in the sun, as he had seen his wife do with them, and supposed them to belong to his cousin, whom he believed to have concealed himself in the depth of the cave, whither the darkness hindered him to advance. "Very well, cousin," said he; "either come out and speak to me, or I will

will take thy carrots, and carry them home to our afs."

The kardouon not thinking proper either to answer, or to discover itself, Xailoun began to consider how he should do, in order to carry away the carrots. He remembered, that when he was at home with his wife, a woman in their neighbourhood had once given them some prunes, and that his wife had filled his turban with them, after putting leaves about them, to keep them fresh. He observed some burdock leaves growing near the mouth of the cave. Of these he gathered enow to cover the inside of his cap, as he had seen his wife do; and then filled it with what he supposed to be carrots.

After this little adventure, in which he seemed to himself to have behaved with great wisdom, he bade farewell to his cousin, and returned to Bagdad. By the way, he tried to eat, if it were only one piece of the provisions which he was carrying home to his afs. He found it excessively hard, and supposed that his cousin must have good teeth, if he could eat such food, without boiling it. At length, he reached his own house. Oitbha was surprised to see him return so soon. "Where hast thou been?" said she; "What hast thou got within these leaves?"—"I have been to see my cousin in his country-house," said he. "He would not speak to me: But I opened his door, went into his house, put my hand into the pots in which he keeps his provisions, and have brought away a quantity of his carrots, which will make a good meal for our afs; but they must be boiled, for they are very hard."

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While he was speaking, Oitbha took the turban, and saw that what he called carrots were pieces of gold. She knew that her husband could not have designedly stolen them, as he knew not what they were; but it was of importance for her to know where he had found them. "Good!" said she, as she went to lock up the contents of the turban, lest some one might surprise them, while she held them openly in her hand. She then set Xailoun to relate his story, without doing any thing to disturb him, and thus discovered that he had found out some hidden treasure. The place mentioned by Xailoun, could not be above half a league from Bagdad. Enough of the day still remained to afford her time to go thither, and take advantage of what remained: and as the cave was still open, curious persons might come about it, who had more penetration than her husband. She determined to set out immediately, saddled the asfs, put two bags upon her, made Xailoun ride behind, bought two loaves for him to eat by the way, and thus followed him to the house of his cousin. She found the mouth of the cave open, as Xailoun had told her; and the urn, from which he had taken what he had brought home, still uncovered. She made him bring the two bags, and filled them so as to load the asfs. These Xailoun then brought out of the cave, and found them of considerable weight. While Oitbha was thus employed, Xailoun was calling with all his might upon his cousin. The noise was disagreeable to his wife; but she saw that she had no time to lose. At last, she left the cave, and the asfs was loaded. Then, with proper attention, she made Xailoun replace the stone upon the cave's mouth, and

and lay over it the ruins which he had formerly removed. She then returned to her house, making him lead the ass slowly on by the bridle, as she had a good load.

Oitbha carefully locked up the sacks; for, she being a prudent woman, what he had brought home in the turban, was sufficient to make her easy by degrees, yet so as not to draw the particular notice of any person upon them. Now, however, instead of driving her husband out of the house, as before, she persuaded, and even commanded him to stay at home. She gave him new clothes, and enough of food; but his clothes were still of the same coarse stuff as formerly; and, although dressed in fresh clothes, he did not yet think himself changed, which was what he in his heart aspired to, in order that he might not be any longer either scolded or beaten.

However, his wife, wishing to make him good cheer, and not having yet hired a slave, sent him out to buy meat, rice, and pease, with money for each different article wrapped up separately. He went to the butcher, and made his market there. He did the same for the rice; but he had forgotten the pease, and brought back the money he had received for them, with the other articles which he had purchased. "I bade thee buy pease," said Oitbha; "go back quickly for them." "Pease?" replied Xailoun, and wished that he might not forget. But one of his comrades met him, and seeing him better clad, and in better case than ordinary, sought to amuse himself at his expence. "So, so," said he, "thou art better clad now, than when thou actedst the evil genie, and plumper than when thou wast used to prowl among the burying-places." Here was
Xailoun

Xailoun again confounded, when his memory was thus refreshed, with the cruellest incident in his life. "Did not my wife daily tell me," said he to himself, "I should nevertheless still desire to change, that people might not every day come to tell me that I have been an ass, an ox, an evil genie!—But, what was I going to seek? It was—It was—It is—" But he could not recollect the name, *pease*, with all the pains he he could take. He thought at first that he could not return home, for shame, to ask his wife, anew, those words which he found it so hard to remember. But he desired to eat of the meat and rice; and this was an incitement to make him venture.

When Oitbha saw him return once more empty-handed, she almost lost patience. But although she had blamed his laziness as long as they had need for his industry, she could never blame him for his silliness of mind. "I want *pease*," said she; "dost thou hear?—*Pease*; repeat *pease* all the way to the market; and if thou dost not perform what I bid thee, I shall correct thee with a vengeance."

Xailoun, intimidated by this menace, went away, repeating continually, "*Pease, pease*." He passed a corner of a street, where a merchant was selling pearls, and was announcing what he had to sell, by crying out stoutly, "In the name of God, Pearls!" Such as were curious, came up and examined his pearls, which he displayed in open boxes. Xailoun's curiosity was moved by this new object, and he was at the same time anxious not to forget his lesson. He put his hand in the box, and continued to call loudly, "*Pease, pease!*" The merchant, supposing that

Xailoun.

Xailoun was mocking him, and that he meant to represent his pearls as false, struck him rudely. "Why do you strike me?" said Xailoun.—"Because you insult me," replied the merchant: "Do you think me capable of imposing upon the public?"—"No," said Xailoun; "but I was saying—And how should I say, then?"—"If thou wouldst say right, cry like me, "*In the name of God, Pearls!*"—"Yes," said Xailoun, "I think that is what my wife bade me say;" and accordingly went on his way, repeating, as he passed along, in a soft voice, "*In the name of God, Pearls.*" He happened to pass by the shop of a man who had been robbed of some pearls. This manner of crying them, in a voice unusually faint, appeared suspicious to the merchant. "My thief," said he, "seems to know me. He lowers his tone at passing my shop." Upon this bare suspicion, he ran after Xailoun, and stopped him, saying, "Shew me your pearls." Xailoun was confounded; and this confirming the merchant's suspicion, he seized him roughly by the neck, and called for assistance. A crowd gathered about the pretended pearl-merchant; and the accuser at length discovered, that he whom he had seized and maltreated, was but a poor idiot. "Why didst thou cry," said he, "that thou hadst pearls to sell?"—"How ought I to cry, then?" replied Xailoun.—"That is not true," said the merchant not choosing to attend to him; "That is not true."

"That is not true!" said Xailoun; "let me try then, *That is not true*;—let me try not to forget it." As he went on, therefore, he repeated with all his might, "That is not true." He went
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on to where a man was selling *Machs* *. “*In the name of God, Machs,*” was his cry. Xailoun, urged by his usual curiosity, and full of the last words that had been given him, came to put his hand in the bag like the rest, saying, “*That is not true.*” The stout clown gave Xailoun a blow which made him stagger. “It fits thee well,” said he, “to undervalue my goods, who have both sown and gathered them myself.”—“I!” said Xailoun; “I undervalue them not; I only speak out what I ought.”—“Well,” replied the country man, “you ought to say as I do: *In the name of God, Machs.*” Xailoun, that he might get home without meeting with any other bad adventure, set about repeating this new cry. He happened to be at this time upon the banks of the Euphrates. A fisherman had been there, busy casting his net for two hours, and every minute changing his place, yet without taking any fishes. Xailoun, whose attention was readily caught by every thing, went to follow the fisherman, repeating, that he might not forget the cry, “*In the name of God, Machs.*”

Of a sudden, before Xailoun had any suspicion of what was the matter, the fisherman, seeming as if he were spreading out his net, doubled the cord of it in his hand, seized the idiot, and, whipping him with severity, said, “Abominable forcerer! cease in the name of God to curse my fishing.”

“I a forcerer!” said he; “here is another change!” And, upon saying this, he wept. The fisherman looked at him, and said, “If thou art not a forcerer, why dost thou make me so

* A sort of small lentil, that acts as a febrifuge, and is carried to market only on certain days of the year.

to unsuccessful in throwing my net?"—"It is not I that make you unsuccessful: I was bidden speak thus." The fisherman then imagined that some of his enemies might have engaged the poor simpleton to treat him as he did, that he might spoil his fishing, without exposing himself. "I am sorry, brother, that I beat you," said he to Xailoun. "But you were wrong to say what you did; for, by that, you injured me, who had done you no harm."—"I wish to injure nobody," said Xailoun; "I only endeavour to recollect the words which my wife bade me say."—"Do you know them?"—"Yes, I do know them."—"Set yourself down beside me; and when I throw my net, you shall say, *"In the name of God, instead of one, seven of the largest and finest fishes."*"—"I cannot think it was so long as that."—"So long! But not a word must be wanting: I shall give you some of the fishes to carry home with you; but remember, that not a word be wanting." Then the fisherman again repeated, say, *"In the name of God, instead of one, seven of the largest and finest fishes."*

Xailoun continued to repeat it with all his might, to hinder himself from forgetting it. But being still afraid of being whipped with the cord, "He will give me them," said he to himself, "were I only to do this!" And no sooner did he see the fisherman employed in drawing his net, than he cried with all his might, repeating incessantly, "In the name of God, instead of one, seven of the largest and finest fishes."

He pronounced those words amidst a crowd of people; for the crowd, although he knew not how, always attracted him. He was now beside a bier, in which the body of a cadî was

conveyed to the grave. The Mollahs who walked about the body, were shocked at the horrible imprecation which they heard. "Profane wretch," said they, "darest thou to disturb such ceremonies as these, and thus openly to devote the greatest men in Bagdad to death? Is it not enough, that he, whose body we are conveying to the grave, has felt its force?"

Xailoun was a good Musulman, and had been taught to entertain great respect for the Mollahs. The air, and the tone of voice with which this reproach was uttered, affected him more sensibly than the strokes with the cord. He made off, trembling, and crying aloud, "Ah! my God! my God! what should I say then?"—An old slave, who followed in the funeral procession, took him by the sleeve. "Thou shouldst say," said she, "God preserve his body, and save his soul."—"Eh! Why did not they tell me so?" said Xailoun; and went away, repeating these words, till he was in a street through which they were carrying a dead ass upon a cart. He followed the procession, crying out, "*God preserve his body, and save his soul!*" The people about the cart, exclaimed, "Ah! the profane, blasphemous wretch! Ah! the infidel dog!" and would have beat him with their hands or staves. He sprung from them, and fled away at full speed.

The unlucky wight, Xailoun, said to himself, all in tears, and besprinkled with dirt, "Thou hast suffered a worse change now, than when thou wast an ass, a scullion, an ox, and a wicked genie: Thou art a forcerer, and, what is worse than all that, an infidel!" So saying, he wept, and durst not return home, for fear of being
beaten;

beaten; for he had entirely forgotten the words which his wife had directed him to say, and could carry nothing home. He knew not what to do.

In this state of perplexity, chance led him near the door of the house in which Oirbah's mother lived. There were a number of people standing about one of his wife's sisters, who was sick. He being timorous of entering any where out of the streets, was discouraged by the sight of so large a company. He stood behind the door, and only thrust forward his visage. "It is Xailoun," said his mother-in-law; and then addressed him, "What wantest thou, Xailoun? A bit of goat's flesh?"—"No."—"Some rice?"—"No."—"Something to drink?"—"No." All the folks about, asked, one after another, what he would have, naming over every eatable and drinkable they knew; but the idiot's answer was still, No. "Ah!" said the sick woman, "I know what he wants; it is pease." At hearing this word, Xailoun, transported with joy, ran into the apartment, rushed towards a sofa on which his sister-in-law reclined, and expressed his gratitude with such violence, that, partly through surprize, and partly through pain, she fainted away.

While all were eagerly employed in giving assistance to the sick woman, the mother-in-law thus addressed Xailoun. "Thou lubbard! thou horse thou! What brings thee hither to kill my daughter? Pease, Pease, dost thou say?"—"Yes, pease," although rather confounded at hearing the word, horse. "What meanest thou with thy pease?"—"Pease! my wife said pease;" and he had at the same time in his hand, the

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money

money which had been given him to pay for them, which he had carefully kept, amidst all the unlucky adventures in which he had been engaged.

Oitbha's mother now conceived that her daughter had sent out the idiot to buy pease. There was a person who sold pease near the door; she pointed out the shop to Xailoun. "Go there," said she, "and ask for pease." The dealer took the money, and gave the pease. Xailoun ran home rejoicing, and set his purchase down upon the table. So much had it cost him for forgetting the name, that he determined to keep it all his life upon his tongue's end.

Oitbha no longer thought of boiling the pease for that day. She endeavoured to learn from Xailoun, what had become of him for so long a time. He gave her a confused account of his adventures, complaining bitterly that he had been taken for a forcerer and an infidel, while he was only seeking pease. The only thing that was clear, in all his narrative, was, that his wife had a sister who was sick, and that Xailoun had been at her mother's house. Oitbha was grieved, to think that she could not hinder her husband from running into so many ridiculous adventures. But, till she might prudently employ some part of her riches this way, she resolved to wait yet some time with patience, and to keep him as much as possible out of the way of new accidents.

Next day, Oitbha prepared to go to see her sister who was sick. She suckled her child, and left Xailoun to rock him, if he should awake and cry: if the ass were thirsty, he was to give her water; and he was carefully to feed a hen which
they

they had clucking. "Be careful to keep the door shut," said she; "thou mayest fall asleep, and thieves may come in to rob us." After giving him all the instructions she could, she went her way, leaving him a plentiful breakfast. Xailoun did the first part of what he had been bidden, with sufficient diligence, and after that took a nap. The child awaked, and cried; he rocked him in the cradle; and thus far every thing went wonderfully well. As he had nothing better to do, he employed his attention upon the objects about him. The hen seemed very uneasy, and was every now and then lifting up her foot, and scratching her head with it. "This poor creature is troubled with lice," said Xailoun, "and so am I; my wife combs me; I shall do well to comb the hen."

He arose, seized the comb and the hen, and endeavoured to catch the little insects that he saw; but the hen struggled, and her head slipped from under the comb. He then conceived, that it might be easier to kill the poor beast's enemies with a great pin, with which, as he did not go softly to work, he pierced her skull, and the hen instantly died. Xailoun was struck with consternation when he saw that he had killed her, but was still more grievously mortified when he found her eggs cold. To complete his perplexity, the asfs began to bray. "Oh!" said he, "at present I have not time to draw water for thee. Thou canst carry me safe to the river when I am on thy back; go thy way thither without me." So saying, he opened the door, let out the asfs, shut it again; and the asfs, with her colt, trotted away through the streets of Bagdad.

The good man then went up to the cradle with a great earthen plate, in which were the hen's eggs, and sat down upon the eggs. It was possible for him to sit upon them without breaking them, but not unless he very cautiously kept his balance. The child awaked; he rocked it, without changing his posture. He rocked it again; but rocking was now to no purpose. It was hunger made it cry; and only food could pacify it. Xailoun was, at bottom, a good-hearted man, and knew no greater distress than hunger. "Poor little creature!" said he, "thou wilt die if milk is not given thee; thy mother has not yet come back: but I should surely have milk; I have as large a throat as she." He then opened his vest, took the child, and, without rising from the eggs, laid it to his breast as a nurse would have done; and his beard hung almost entirely over it. The infant, being at first deceived, ceased crying; and applied its lips to the dry breast presented to it. Xailoun was delighted, and rocked it in his arms, as he had seen his wife do. He tried also to sing; and then said, "My wife wishes me to change: she must be surprised indeed, to see me changed into a nurse and a clucking hen." In the meantime, the child, not finding what instinct prompted him to seek, became impatient, began anew to cry, and would not be stilled.

Xailoun was still more and more perplexed; but his embarrassment was soon at its highest pitch. His wife knocked at the door; and was already in no good humour. She had found the ass and her colt; and supposed that Xailoun had been more than negligent in acquitting himself of his commissions. "Open!" said she.—"I cannot,"

cannot," replied Xailoun: "I am clucking; I am nursing." The sturdy Oitbha took up a stone, threw it against the door, and forced the lock. She then saw the ridiculous posture Xailoun was in. But, however angry she might be, her duty as a mother commanded her first emotions. She took the child from him, and held it to her own breast. Then casting an angry look on Xailoun, and on all about him, she saw the hen dead beside him. "Who killed that hen?"—"I was combing her."—"Where are the eggs?"—"I am clucking them."

At these two new proofs of fatuity, Oitbha lost all patience. She gave him a blow with her hand that remained free. "Rise, idiot!" said she; "had any of our neighbours come in with me, what think you would have been said? Are not you already sufficiently a subject of ridicule to the whole city?"

The blow, although none of the heaviest, made Xailoun lose his balance, and crush the eggs. He perceived what had happened; and, fearing that the mischief might recoil upon himself, fell to one side with his arm under him upon the ground, and began to cry like a child. "Get up, beast!" said his wife, threatening him. Xailoun then arose, and turned about; so that Oitbha could not avoid observing the effects of his new exploit.

Oitbha regretted not the loss of either the hen or the eggs. But she was anxious to find some means, by which her husband's fatuity might either be removed or concealed. The first great point was, to keep him within doors. He was her husband, the father of her children: by his means, had she become mistress of a fortune, which,

which, without his assistance, she could not turn to sufficient advantage: she did not want reasons, therefore, to induce her to take care of him, and to keep him out of the way of those disgraceful adventures which his curiosity and imbecility of mind continually exposed him to.

She did what she could, therefore, to keep him about her, fed him well, and had recourse to kindness and threatenings alternately, to prevent him from renewing his habits of idle strolling. But the propensity she sought to overcome was invincible. Xailoun, still occupied with the desire of change, the only idea which his vacant mind could entertain, watched his opportunity and stole out, whenever he saw himself unobserved, in pursuit of means to accomplish his metamorphosis. "I have asked God to change me; but he has not heard my prayer, neither in, nor out of Bagdad. It is perhaps my fault, and not his. Was I not always told, that a Musulman ought to turn to the south when he says his prayers? I must then go southward, in search of God: then, he must surely hear me."

Making these reflections, he went out of the city; and, having travelled a good way, came within sight of a distant forest. "Let me go see that great garden; I may eat my bellyful of fruit in it at leisure; it is larger than that in which I formerly was, and must contain much more fruit: by eating a great quantity more, I may perhaps be changed; for, though not a jack-ass, I am however flesh and blood as well as our ass." Xailoun had exerted the whole force of his understanding in this reasoning. When he entered the forest, he was astonished at the height of the trees, but could see no fruit. Advancing

vancing farther through the wood, he heard a noise; he ran towards the place from which it seemed to come, with his usual eagerness. He was soon in the midst of a troop of robbers, who were employed in the division of some plunder which they had lately taken. The robbers seized him, and deliberated among themselves, whether they should cut off his head and feet. "Ah! my God! my God! do you intend to change me into a dead man?" They had not come to a determination, before one of the robbers came up at full gallop, and informed his comrades, that he had seen a company of armed cavaliers enter the wood. The robbers, in a fright, left Xailoun and their booty; mounted their horses, and rode off with all speed.

The idiot's fear being thus removed, his curiosity returned. He had begun to amuse himself with opening the parcels they had left, in order to see what was within, when a part of the company who were in pursuit of the robbers, surrounded and seized him, in the supposition that he was one of the band. They bound his hands, gave him abusive language, and carried him to a prison in Bagdad. He was put into the jailor's hands, as one of a party of robbers who had done considerable mischief; and those who brought him in, declared that they would soon find his comrades. "Run to the south!" said Xailoun to himself, "and there be changed into a robber! Assuredly, whatever may have been told me, God is not there. But I was not long an ass, an ox, or an evil genie; and I shall not remain long a robber."

While he was making this reflection in the dungeon in which he was confined, he happened

to draw the curiosity of one, whom guilt, rather than misfortune, had brought into the same state of confinement. This man's name was Fetah, a notorious robber, who had been generally dreaded. He had been surprised, on the preceding evening, in the commission of a robbery of considerable magnitude. Fetah had long been known to the officers of justice. He had been repeatedly taken, but had always found means to escape; and when Xailoun was brought into his company, he was anxiously contriving some new expedient to extricate himself. Fetah viewed his comrade, by the light of a lamp which faintly illuminated the prison. He immediately addressed him, and inquired into the circumstances of his imprisonment. Xailoun, who wanted only opportunity to talk, told him, that having gone to the south to ask God to change him, in order that his wife might no longer beat or confine him to the house, he had been all of a sudden changed into a robber.

Fetah was pleased with this opening of their acquaintance; it promised well for his views. He saw his companion to be an idiot, for whom he might, with great ease, lay some successful snare. In an hour's time, he saw perfectly into Xailoun's character; and, from the consideration of what he had done, and how he had reasoned through the whole course of his life, as well as from his fantasy of wishing to be changed, conceived the project of transforming himself in such a manner, as he might make his escape.

Fetah, to disguise himself in case he should be taken in the commission of his last act of robbery, had blackened his beard and hair, and communicated a dusky hue to his eye-brows, which
were

were naturally of a very fair colour, as were also Xailoun's hair and eye-brows. The robber, while he thus discoloured his hair, had equally disguised the natural complexion of his skin; so that he now resembled, rather a negro than an Arab. His countenance was naturally ruddy, and so was Xailoun's. Fetah, therefore, contrived to wash himself, to besmear Xailoun with lamp-black, and by persuading him to change clothes, to effect a complete metamorphosis.

"Brother," said he to Xailoun, "you were in the wrong to go to the south in search of God. His palace is every where. For my part, if I chose to pray with you, and you were willing to change with me, we need only to pray here, and the thing would be instantly done, without trouble; you should no longer be yourself, but me. Could you then be taken for a robber? or would your wife, after that, dare to beat you?" "You are very black," said Xailoun; "such nearly was my aspect, when I was changed into a scullion; but my wife beat me nevertheless."

"You dislike this colour, then?"—"No," said Xailoun.—"You shall see," said Fetah, "that it is very easy to obtain one different. You need only to pray well. Let us turn our backs upon one another. Seek you God upon the south, I shall turn to the north, and we shall both find him. Let us both ask, in a low voice, to be changed; I shall tell you when the change has taken place." Xailoun eagerly obeyed. Fetah dipped a handkerchief in his pitcher of water, and dexterously wiped off all the blackening from his hair, beard, and features. He then applied lamp-black to a tin vessel in which his food had been brought to him, and at the same time stain-
ed

ed his hands ; after which, turning suddenly, he said to Xailoun, " Am I changed or not ? Do you find me the same I was before ? " Xailoun was confounded ; for Fetah's figure was naturally handsome enough. " What ! " said the idiot, " shall I change as you have done ? "—" Yes," said Fetah, " if you allow me to mark my features upon your face." Xailoun consented ; and, in a moment, Fetah made him blacker than he himself was. " This is not all," said he ; " we must also change clothes ; and mine, you see, are perfectly new." Thus was Xailoun transformed. Fetah wished to convince him, that the change was entirely for his advantage. " You shall see now," said he, " how you are to be served here. I hear the doors open ; the turnkey is coming in : give him this piece of money ; and, in a firm tone of voice, bid him get you some pilau, and a shoulder of mutton to your dinner."

Xailoun, being accustomed to repeat whatever was said to him, delivered the piece of money without looking on it, and, at the same time, the order that had been put in his mouth to the turn-key. The latter perceiving, by the light of the lamp, that it was gold he had received, saluted Xailoun in respect to his money, and went to acquit himself of his commission.

While Xailoun enjoyed the satisfaction of being changed so as to command respect, and Fetah the hope of escaping by means of his artifice ; opposite measures had been resolved upon with respect to the fate of these two prisoners. The Caliph, learning that the famous Fetah was taken, ordered him to be led out of the city, and there to undergo, in all its rigour, the punishment to which he had already been sentenced.

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On the other hand, some of the robbers with whom Xailoun had confounded himself, had by this time been taken, and interrogated with respect to him. They were asked, who he was? They unanimously deposed, that he was a silly idiot, whom they had frightened for their diversion. It was therefore determined, that he should be forthwith set at liberty. A judge went to the prison, and ordered the idiot to be brought before him. The jailor came, and striking Fetah on the shoulder, said, "Come, thou idiot, thou art going to be discharged." Fetah followed.—"Go," said the judge to him, "go home, poor man; and, if you possibly can, be less foolish in future."

"Bring Fetah," said the judge. The jailor went then to Xailoun. "You have not time to finish your shoulder of mutton, friend. The judge asks for you. The remains must be mine. But this signifies little to you. If you have any other pieces of gold about you, you may give them to me; your business will soon be done; and in a little, you shall need nothing in this world."

Xailoun heard the jailor with an air of insensibility. He had seen his comrade treated as an idiot, and now heard himself addressed in a quite different tone. He was besides assured of what he was perfectly willing to believe, that he should soon want for nothing. However, he did not offer to move.

"March!" said the jailor: "Let not me have the trouble of dragging you out by force; but come away with good will."—"I?" replied Xailoun; "I should be sorry to give you trouble; I come." The jailor looked at him, and said,

"Follow me."—Xailoun obeyed like a child, and was conducted to the judgment-hall. The judge then spoke: "Fetah, hear your sentence read." The clerk instantly began to read a list of crimes which were fully proven, and for which the criminal was condemned to the extraordinary punishment of being hanged on a gibbet without the city. "Who is he has done all this?" said Xailoun. "Does that paper not mention that I am changed? I am changed however, you see." The judge not knowing Fetah's personal appearance, supposed that he was acting the idiot, of purpose to escape punishment; and ordered him nevertheless to be gone towards the place of execution. Oitbha had not remained easy in her husband's absence. She had thought of all the various accidents which were liable to befall a man of his character. She never suspected him to have gone out of Bagdad. He might be drowned in the Euphrates; he might have involved himself in some quarrel; and, in consequence of getting himself wounded, might have been carried to the hospital. She had already been through the whole city in search of information about him.

She went at last to the prison, where she was told that an idiot had just been dismissed from confinement. She returned home; but not finding Xailoun, was still more alarmed, and went back to the prison.

Here she was told, that a notorious robber, named Fetah, was just led out to punishment. He went bareheaded; but she could not, for this, know him the more readily. The deception was rendered complete, by the blackening of his hair, face, beard, and whole person, and by the change of his dress. In the gait and attitude of the figure,

gure, however, and in his gawky practice of stopping, as he went along, to gaze about him, there was something that reminded her every moment of Xailoun; and she could not help following the train. A new incident soon convinced her, that it was undoubtedly he. As he was going out of Bagdad, Xailoun observing a kardouon upon a pile of stones near-by, stopped short, and addressed it. "Ah! good-day, cousin!" They bade him go on; but he replied, "that he wished to speak to his cousin, and to know whether he thought him changed." The judge and the guard were astonished at this act of stupidity, whether real or feigned. But Oitbha, that moment lifting her veil, fell at the judge's feet. "My Lord, this is not Fetah, but an innocent creature who never did ill to any person. It is my poor husband, the silly Xailoun, who, out of his excessive simplicity, has suffered some one or other to disguise him in this manner. Permit me to make him clean, and we shall find people here who know him."

"Come, wretch!" said Oitbha then to Xailoun, in that tone of authority which she knew so well how to assume with him: "Where hast thou been, to get thyself disguised in this manner?"—"The other who was with me, changed me thus."—"Art thou not ashamed to have suffered thyself, after so many ridiculous changes, to be at last changed into a robber, to expose thyself to death?"

Xailoun made no reply; but suffered his wife to wipe away, with a handkerchief, the blackening that was upon his face and hair. The children who lived near the prison, began to cry, "Ah! this is the genie who devoured dead car-

cases!" And, in the mean time, one of the cavaliers who had taken him, came up to the judge, and assured him, that this was not Fetah the robber. "I took him myself, my Lord; I had him three days in my custody, and should surely know him. This man is no other than the idiot whom we found in the wood some days since, and whom you ordered to be set at liberty. Fetah must have had the address to change places with him."

The judge was now satisfied, but could only suspend the execution, till he should have given the Caliph and his superiors an account of what had happened. He therefore sent Xailoun back to prison. Oitbha followed. Her first care was, to send for new and suitable clothes, and to make him put off those by which he had been exposed to death and ignominy. She then paid the jailor nobly, before hand, for the care which she recommended to him to take of Xailoun, till the order for his deliverance should arrive. The people about the prison said, "Happy idiot!"—As to Xailoun, a change of dress would have been agreeable to him upon any other occasion; but since his wife knew him, and he was now again in danger of being scolded and beaten, the metamorphosis that produced this effect, could not give him pleasure.

The order came to set Xailoun at liberty, and Oitbha carried him away with her. It cannot be supposed that she would treat him very gently, either by the way, or in the house. It was necessary to impress him with fear, that he might be hindered from strolling abroad in search of new adventures. It was impossible, however, to divest him of his relish for these, or to make him
reason

reason otherwise than he had been accustomed to do.

In order to see an end of the scolding, beating, and confinement which he had suffered, it was necessary that he should be changed; but the change could only be effected by the operation of God, whom he had hitherto sought, without finding him. "God," said Xailoun to himself, "is not inferior to a vizier; now here is a vizier's palace near-by us; people go to him, and speak to him: I, in the same manner, will go to the palace of God, and speak to him."

He one day found means to make his escape, and went about asking every body where the palace of God was. He was directed to a mosque. "It is not here," said he: "Here prayers are put up to Mahomet, for the Musulmans." He went on repeating his question, till he came within the vicinity of the Caliph's palace. One of the guards observed him. He found means to make Xailoun explain what favours he desired to obtain; and it occurred to him, that the Caliph might perhaps receive some amusement from the character and wishes of the poor simpleton.

"Come," said he to Xailoun; "I will take you to the place you ask for."—"And shall I speak to God?"—"Yes, you shall speak to him, and shall see him face to face." So saying he led him into the palace, made him sit down, and bade him wait till he should return.

Although Xailoun was only in the outer court, and in the apartment of an inferior officer, every thing already appeared to him very fine. But when the lifeguard-man carried him through the courts and apartments opening to the divan, he cried out incessantly, "The palace of God, ah!

how fine!" When he saw the Caliph on his throne, he was absolutely dazzled and confounded. His conductor took him by the arm, and made him advance. "Here he is," said he; "prostrate yourself before him, and speak to his Highness."

"What shall I say?" said Xailoun.—"Ask him to change you, and tell your reasons." We shall not here put down Xailoun's speech. He was so overpowered with confusion and astonishment, that it wanted even its ordinary portion of good sense. His wife, his house, the street in which he lived, the blows he had borne, his having been successively changed into an ass, an ox, a forcerer, a nurse, a hen, and a robber within an inch of being hanged: all these particulars were confusedly intermixed through his narrative, with the help of his introducer, who led him on from one part of the detail to another. He ended at length with saying, once for all, "My God, since you understand me, change me; but in such a shape that my wife may not know me again: Change me better than you changed our ass, for she is still forced to bear some blows." Haroun Alraschid could hardly help laughing. However, the Caliph restrained himself, and commanded the lifeguard-man to conduct Xailoun into an apartment, where he might be immediately changed. Had he not been at a distance from the Caliph, he would have thrown himself at his feet, and in his awkwardness might have bruised him. But he was without the ballustrade which surrounded the throne.

The eunuchs conducted him into an apartment where a plentiful repast was immediately served up before him. The dishes were such as he had
never

never before seen or tasted. This circumstance gratified his turn for novelty, and rendered them so much the more agreeable to him. He found every thing excellent, and freely indulged his appetite, thus convinced as he was, that man can be changed by nothing but good cheer, since God himself, in his own palace, employed no other means. Exquisite wines were added to assist the effects of this good cheer. He knew not what those were, but he gladly indulged in the pleasure of drinking them. A liquor, powerfully narcotic, had been previously intermixed; it soon began to operate; and, before he could rise from the table, he fell sound asleep.

The slaves, who had been waiting for this, immediately took him up, bathed him, shaved him, and cleared away every hair that was on his body. They next brought from the seraglio an old female slave, who was skilled in the preparation of pomatums, paints, and the whole apparatus of the toilet. With her balsams she could communicate freshness and fragrance even to a dead skull. Xailoun passed through her hands, and came from under them all bright and fresh as a rose, and having a soft down upon his skin. A single tress of beautiful fine hair, bound up in graceful negligence, now adorned his head, instead of the brown stunted scratch with which it had been before covered. So much of his eyebrows had been left, as formed two fine arches; and these were soon tinged with the same colour as the hair. A sky-blue jacket was put upon his body, and left open before, so as to discover his neck and breast, the veins of which were painted blue, so as to shed a soft lustre over the whiteness of the rest of the skin: he wore, at the same time,

time, a stomacher richly set with precious stones in the form of a sun; a string of pearls adorned his neck, which was naturally a very fine one; his feet were shod with rich buskins; a splendid scarf was bound about him as a girdle; a robe of gauze, bespangled with silver stars, and gracefully buckled on one side with a clasp, beset with rubies, floated over his shoulders: wings would have been added, to complete his transformation, had it not been, that they would have too much embarrassed his motions. When the old female slave had thus metamorphosed the great lumpish Xailoun into an angel, he was carried into a magnificent hall, and seated upon a sofa, and under a canopy, both in the highest degree sumptuous and splendid. Four mirrors stood opposite, to salute his eyes with as many reflections of his own altered figure. Here he was left to finish his nap.

On this same evening, the Feast of Flowers * was to be celebrated within the palace; and the Caliph had fancied that Xailoun's transfiguration might contribute to improve the gaiety of the feast. The eunuchs were to wait till it should appear, from the ordinary symptoms, that the operation of the drugs, by which he had been laid asleep, was at an end; and then to give a signal to musicians, who were placed in an elevated situation in the hall, in a gallery concealed by gauze curtains; where the Caliph himself impatiently waited, to enjoy the figure which Xailoun was likely to make, when he should be fairly awaked and roused by the sounds of the music.

Night

* At this feast, two lamps and a mirror are set before every flower in the garden. It is a very splendid festival, and is celebrated every Spring.

Night came on, and still Xailoun was asleep. The artificial means that had been used to prolong his slumbers, were seconded by his happy natural tendency that way. At last, he was seen to move and stretch himself. The music began very softly at first, but was soon quickened by an intermixture of martial sounds; and then Xailoun awoke.

Two hundred lamps illuminated the place. He looked before him, and saw an angel in the looking-glass: he turned himself, and the glass behind the sofa presented another angel to his eye there. He looked first to the one side, then to the other; but still he saw angels. He then cast his eyes upon his hands, his feet and his body, and still was dazzled by all he saw. He did not speak, but cried out ridiculously. He ran about through the hall, and went close up to all the mirrors one after another; and still angels seemed to come up to him, and kiss him. "Oh! oh!" cried he, and could say no more, so great was his astonishment. At last, he seemed to recover his wits. "I see all this very well," said he; "but where am I, and what have I been changed into? Oh, Xailoun! Xailoun! come and see all this, that thou mayest tell thy wife." Then running to the mirror, "Tell me then," said he, "you who are so handsome, where is poor Xailoun?—Hold, handsome as I am, I must weep, if I cannot see poor Xailoun." A soft, a mild, a sonorous voice now spoke from the gallery. "Seek no longer for that Xailoun, whom thou once knewest, and whom his wife used to beat; thou art he; thou didst desire to be changed, and changed thou art."—"And who are those handsome youths about the hall, who come
up

up to me when I go towards them; who kiss me, but have such cold noses; who speak, and I cannot hear them?"—"These are thy pictures, who present themselves to thee in the looking-glasses. Hast thou never seen thyself in a mirror before?"—"Oh! yes; but I never saw more than one picture of myself at a time; but I see them every where now, and some of them even turn their backs upon me."—"They are all thy own portraits, however."—"Well, you who speak, tell God, who is so rich, to give me all these portraits, that I may give them to my wife."—"Wouldst thou return to thy wife who beats thee?"—"Yes; she will no longer beat me, now that I am changed."—"Wouldst thou not remain with God then?"—"I will remain with God, and with my wife: we have a child who is now big. I shall come and say my prayers here five times a day."

The Caliph was much amused with this conversation; but it was time to admit the ladies of his court to share the pleasure it afforded. Some officers came in, to give Xailoun notice, that he was expected in the palace-gardens. He bade adieu to all his portraits, and they all returned the compliment; after which, being habituated to obedience, he followed those who called him. The festival, at which Xailoun was invited to assist, was of a nature to transport him. By every flower, stood a mirror; and the portraits of himself, which he had taken farewell of in the hall, seemed to follow him hither, and to pursue him wherever he went. Four thousand lamps stood on the ground to illuminate this brilliant scene, and ten thousand coloured lanterns decorated the palace upon all sides. Xailoun's

loun's first idea led him to think, that he was in paradise. "Not to deceive you," said one of the eunuchs, "you are only in the terrestrial paradise here, which belongs to God's vicegerent. We shall carry you to him." The expression, God's vicegerent, was what Xailoun's brain could not comprehend, as by his creed there was only one God. However, he had not time for heretical reflections, but immediately perceived the Caliph in a magnificent pavilion, shining in all the lustre of majesty, and surrounded by all the beauties of his Haram.

At this sight, Xailoun exclaimed, "O what a multitude of portraits!" He was introduced within the circle, and all the ladies vied with one another in ogling him, and toying with him. He was disposed to approach very near them. "Come, kiss me," said he, "and let me feel whether you have your noses as cold as the others?—Ah! you speak! Do you know me? Am not I finely changed? Oh! our afs and I shall surprize all the neighbours. There will be nothing in the whole quarter more completely changed."

The Caliph's ladies were like to die with laughing. In their frolicsome humour, they tried to tempt Xailoun from his fidelity to his wife, and to prevail with him to remain with them. "Stay," said he; "I see that you are houries; but I am married, and am not yet dead."—"Do you really love that wife, who gives you so many drubbings?" said one of the Sultanas.—"What mean you by love?" said Xailoun.—"Oitbha is my wife, and I must live with her. Is it love that makes man and wife live together?"

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The Caliph, perceiving that they had obtained almost all the diversion that could be expected from Xailoun, ordered that he should have an excellent supper, and should be again put asleep; intending to send notice to Oitbha next day, that she might come for her husband. Xailoun supped with an hearty appetite; for all the fine objects he had seen, had not turned his head with love. He was charmed with his change, yet was still disposed to return home.

However, the eunuchs and other slaves belonging to the ladies of the seraglio, prepared to amuse themselves at the expence of this poor simpleton, and without the Caliph's knowledge. No sooner was he asleep, than they stripped him of his clothes, and all his ornaments; dressed him in goat-skins; covered his hands with gloves, the fingers of which terminated in vultures claws, and his head with a huge borachio mask, which was fitted with two large glass eyes, of a fiery colour.

When the slaves had thus disguised poor Xailoun, so as to render him horrible in his own eyes, they laid him down upon a mattress, in a dark apartment in the ground storey of the palace, where such slaves as were guilty of slight faults used to receive punishment: and, to give him light, by which he might see what a situation he was in, they hung up two lamps to illuminate the dungeon, and fixed some mirrors around the walls. After arranging every thing, so as to give this new transformation its full effect, the women and eunuchs went to continue their festive amusements in the garden, till Xailoun should awake; and the various entertainments that had been provided for the Caliph and his

his ladies, continued to enliven the rest of the night. When day returned, the chief eunuch perceived, that none of the servants were in their places. He went in search of them, and found them enjoying the terror, tortures, and cries of poor Xailoun. The chief eunuch would have inflicted exemplary punishment upon the authors of this piece of barbarity, but the favourite of the Caliph's favourite presided over the party.

If we reflect, that Xailoun had, in the space of fourteen hours, taken two narcotic drinks; that he had passed from a visionary view of paradise to another of hell,—the crystal before his eyes, in his latter situation, having represented all around him as in flames; that he had been tempted to riot in all the luxuries of the table, and had been exposed to all the petulance of a troublesome crowd; we cannot but allow, that even a wise man, in such circumstances, might have become a fool.

Alas! Xailoun here, as in the milln and at the plough, was consoled by one consideration. From his own experience, he knew that changes, whether good or bad, could not be lasting. But while he saw himself thus metamorphosed from an angel to a devil, he had a confused recollection of its having been told him in the garden, that he was in the palace of God's vicegerent. From this he concluded, that he had not found the true God, and that this was the reason of his last horrible change. "Ah! my God! my God!" cried he, "do you yourself change poor Xailoun, since this your vicegerent has produced so miserable a change upon him!"

His prayer was heard that same instant. The chief eunuch sent all the slaves to their different

tasks, and made the poor man be disengaged from his frightful accoutrements. He then made them dress him anew, from head to foot, in a manner suitable to his real condition in life, and ordered a fine turban to be put upon his shaven head. The idiot was then conducted into an outer apartment of the palace, and served with a good breakfast, which he eagerly devoured, making reflections in his own way upon the occasion. He perceived himself in a mirror to be again changed; and, although he wanted his beard, and had his head covered by a large turban, he thought that he knew himself again. "Ah!" said he, "now am I changed into a young Musliman. My wife has already told me, that I am worse than a child; however, I am not ill as I am; and if I had but a beard, I should be very well pleased to remain so." Xailoun, while he talked thus with himself, and sat opposite to the mirror, was careful not to lose his time, but, with great appetite, ate and drank all that had been set before him.

However, the Caliph being now awake, the chief eunuch had already informed him of the indiscretion of the slaves, in which they had been headed by the favourite's maid. The sovereign, instead of expressing himself angry with them, blamed himself. "I set the example," said he, "and it is not surprising that the slaves should improve upon my frolics. I have observed the man; he has no brain, but is not destitute of a soul. I am curious to see this Oitbha, who, while she has so far subdued him by fear and blows, has at the same time so thoroughly tamed him, that he is still desirous of returning to her. I shall try her character, as I have tried her husband's;

band's; and if I find no reason to be displeased with her, I shall repair the fault which I have committed with respect to them." He immediately ordered one of the eunuchs to bid the life-guard-man who had brought in Xailoun, to go in search of Oitbha his wife, and to inform her of all that had passed in the course of the night. "If she is a woman of a good character," continued the Caliph, "as I have reason to suppose, I shall speedily repair any wrongs I may have committed with respect to her."

The life-guard-man received his orders; and Oitbha, who was by this time uneasy about her husband, thus received notice that he was in the Caliph's palace. The events of the preceding day and night, were at the same time related to her; and she was last of all informed, that the Caliph was expecting her. Oitbha was sufficiently quick-witted, and saw, in a moment, what part it behoved her to take, in order to turn to advantage the abuse which had been made of her husband's simplicity. Hitherto, she had made herself comfortable within doors, but had cautiously concealed the fortune which she had acquired. She might shew some part of it to the Caliph, without exposing herself to any danger: but it must have been a matter of great inconvenience, if any of the cadis had been the first to suspect that she possessed wealth. She therefore dressed herself decently, took two purses, each containing two thousand pieces of gold, fixed them to her girdle, put on a large new veil, and repaired with the life-guard-man to the palace. The Caliph sat on his throne. Oitbha appeared, and prostrated herself before him. He bade her rise. She then uncovered her face, and said, "I

am ready to obey the orders of the sovereign Prince of the Faithful: what is his pleasure in respect to Oitbha, the humblest of his slaves?" "Oitbha," said the Caliph, "Xailoun your husband was brought to my palace yesterday; and you have been informed, that his extreme simplicity has contributed to the amusement of my court. From his own confession, and from what has been told me by others, I understand, that by his natural restlessness, and want of judgment, he has been even in danger of death. It is not just; that a young woman like you, should remain indissolubly united to a man so entirely destitute of sense. I offer to annul your marriage. I am to take charge of your husband myself, by sending him into one of those houses which are appropriated to the reception and confinement of persons, whom it is necessary to secure, by this means, from the consequences of their own misconduct, as well as to free society from the inconveniences which it might suffer by them."

"O, wife Caliph!" said Oitbha; "poor Xailoun is my husband in the sight of God, and consequently cannot cease to be so by law. I should be in despair, if he were shut up in any place where I could not continue my attentions to him. He is the father of my children. He is my crown in the sight of heaven; and the lustre of my conduct must give it brilliancy. He does harm to nobody. His understanding is indeed weak; but it is my business to exert mine, in order to guard him from any inconveniencies he might suffer from the deficiencies of his own. The indolence to which he was naturally inclined, reduced him gradually to his present state of absolute fatuity, and threatened to involve him
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in some unhappy accident. I had recourse to severity, threats, and even blows, when I could not otherwise succeed. After bringing him under subjection, I determined to alter my conduct towards him, and to try whether I could not make him assume a new character in the world. I had kept him for some time with me, free from labour, when unluckily he escaped, and came hither. How comes it, that he has not found a place of safety even in this august abode, which invites all the Musulmans on the earth to seek security in your sacred presence? It happens, from the strange singularity of his fortune and mine, against which I presume to appeal to your majesty's justice. Restore me Xailoun, O sage Caliph! duty renders him dear to me. He is indeed destitute of judgment, but a faithful, harmless Musulman, and even innocence itself. If he has unfortunately injured any person in Bagdad, here are four thousand pieces of gold, the whole of our fortune, to make compensation. I bring them for his ransom; and am even ready to sacrifice my own liberty, in order to make up for what may be wanting to procure his."

Oitbha was not handsome, but there was a degree of dignity in her carriage; her countenance was marked with expression, and with the fresh glow of health and youth. The Caliph was ashamed of having given her reason of complaint against him, by diverting himself, even for so short a time, at the expence of her husband's weakness: but he had always some expedient to extricate himself from any embarrassment in which he happened to fall. He whispered his chief eunuch, who went out, and in a few moments returned

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with a casket under his arm, and leading in Xailoun arrayed in a pellice.

"Oitbha," said Haroun, "here is your husband. He owes the pellice with which I have honoured him, to the sentiments with which, such as he is, he has inspired me in his favour. I perceive that I had formed no wrong judgment of you, from the extraordinary attachment expressed for you by this man, whom one would think incapable of feelings of attachment to any person. I take you both under my protection; and so far am I from exacting a ransom for Xailoun's liberty, that, there are other four thousand sequins, which I give you in addition to those you seem willing to sacrifice."

The first object Xailoun saw when he came in, was his wife. He excused himself for his last elopement, shewed her his pellice, and said, "Changed! changed! much better changed!" He then saw the Caliph: "Ah! claws! horns! Lord God Vicegerent!" and then tried to hide himself behind his wife. Oitbha bowed respectfully, and received the casket, containing the Caliph's present, from the hands of the eunuch: she put likewise into it the four purses which she had brought with her; gave the whole to Xailoun, saluted him, and retired.

The four thousand pieces which she had thus received, were but a trifling addition to the immense fortune which she before possessed; but they afforded a good pretext upon which she might openly enjoy what she had. The Caliph had given her four thousand sequins; and, within an hour after, it was circulated through Bagdad, that he had given her a coffer full of money.

Oitbha,

Oitbha, as she went to the palace, had observed that there was a good looking house to be sold near the great square. She went in, on her way back, struck a bargain for it before she came out, and brought with her the keys.

She then returned home, and began with putting the two sacks which contained her fortune upon the back of the ass. She then led her herself to the new house, being, for secrecy's sake, accompanied by none but Xailoun. For other matters, such as the conveyance of her furniture, she employed the ordinary porters; and, by the evening, she was in full possession of the house which she had bought. A rich merchant had lived in it before, and had not yet disfurnished it. It was already known in the quarter of the town which she had left, that the Caliph had given her a casket full of gold.

Oitbha made no bad use of her riches, but bought next day a very good mule with a couple of bags. On the day after, she proposed to Xailoun to mount the mule, and go with her to his cousin's house. It will readily be supposed that Xailoun had no objection to the making of this visit. Oitbha mounted the ass, and Xailoun followed her on the mule. They arrived at the ruins. The kardouon, Xailoun's adopted cousin, happened to be precisely upon the heap of stones which covered the entrance into the cave. When he saw the cattle and the riders approach, he hid himself; but Xailoun saw him, and cried, "Ah! yonder is our cousin."—"Let us go into his house," said Oitbha: "We must have some food for these poor beasts: Come, Xailoun, let us remove the stones, and enter." Xailoun wrought with courage, till all was cleared away to the trap-door

trap-door and the ring. These were immediately removed, and the entrance into the cavern laid open. Oitbha had brought with her materials for striking a light. She entered the cave, and found in it a quantity of precious vessels, which were useless to her.

“What dost thou seek?” said Xailoun.—“I am seeking our cousin. But he is not here. Let us take some of his carrots.” So saying, she advanced to the urns which contained the gold, filled the four sacks, and made Xailoun bear them out, and lay them upon their cattle which stood at the entrance of the cavern.”—“Come,” said she, “let us shut the gate, and be gone; in the afternoon, we shall return to see whether your cousin may then receive us with more discretion.” Then, after throwing some stones upon the trap-door, she returned towards her own house.

After dinner, she visited it again, and emptied all the urns of the money. She then made Xailoun put the trap-door in its place, covered it with as many stones as possible, and then set out again to Bagdad. She had still left in the cavern great riches, in precious vessels; of this she might one day reveal the secret to her children; but she thought them superfluous for the present.

When Oitbha saw herself fairly settled in her own house, and found the public opinion of her fortune grounded upon the protection and largesses of the Caliph, she then set herself to give Xailoun as much enjoyment of it as possible. The number of her children was increasing; they might one day have to blush for their idiot father. It was therefore requisite to prevent him from committing any acts in public, which might

might betray his weakness of mind, and even to give a colouring to those of his follies which could not be concealed. She first bought slaves, to serve herself and her children: but she was particularly attentive in examining the qualities of those who were to be placed about Xailoun. She could hardly find such as she wanted. At last, she found two, of mature age, possessing good sense, and, in a word, such as she could trust. They were to carry out Xailoun to walk wherever he pleased. He was fond of visiting the ruins, and of conversing with the kardouon which he had formerly met there. His attendants had orders not to contradict him. But whenever he attempted to remove the pile of stones, in order to enter his cousin's house, as he called it, he was then forbidden, and told, that *Oitbha would be angry*. In the very first days of Xailoun's enjoying this liberty, he rode out to the ruins upon his mule. When there, he wanted to visit his cousin, and to take some of his carrots; but upon being barely told, that *Oitbha would be angry*, he was satisfied, and withdrew. His attendants also hindered him from strolling idly about. If he conceived a curiosity for any particular object, they went and brought it to him, described its use; and, if he had a fancy for it, bought it to gratify him. If there was any thing very extravagant in the case, all was put an end to, by telling him, that *Oitbha would be angry*.

There was no more talk in Bagdad concerning his rambles. Oitbha had persuaded him, that he was absolutely changed, and had no farther need of being so, but behaved only to be obedient.

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In the mean time, one of the most considerable merchants in Bagdad, who was Oitbha's neighbour, suffered great losses in trade, and particularly one at sea, which gave his credit a shock. He had no money; Oitbha understood so much, and went to wait upon him. "You behave," said she, "with kindness and humanity to good Xailoun, my husband, every time you have occasion to see him. I think myself much obliged to you. You are a worthy man; and as I understand that you have met with misfortunes, I beg leave to offer you the use of ten thousand sequins, for which you may send immediately to my house. I require no other interest for the loan, unless the pleasure which I have in obliging so worthy a man as you are."

The merchant gratefully accepted so kind an offer, paid his bills, re-established and enlarged his credit and fortune. He told his best friends of Oitbha's generosity; and this good action soon became public. No sooner was it known, that a resource of this kind might be obtained upon occasion, by treating Xailoun kindly, than all the world strove who should treat him best. The slaves who led him about, could hardly withdraw him from the constant demonstrations of friendship with which he was loaded, whenever he walked abroad; but they would never suffer him to accept any thing from whoever offered it.

Oitbha having been repaid by the first merchant whom she had assisted, had occasion to deal in the same manner with three others. One of these failed in his engagements; but his failure gave not the least uneasiness to Oitbha. She received marks of respect in all the streets
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of Bagdad, and was thought to be very extensively concerned in trade. From this time, she could safely make an open display of her wealth, and risk losses.

Xailoun's table was excellent. The Caliph's officers came sometimes to eat with him; and he now uttered scarcely any more of his former absurdities; for the two slaves who attended, either suggested to him a reply, or made one for him. At last, he improved so far (a thing not so hard as may be imagined, when one does not imperitently intrude one's self into conversation) that he could bear his own share, in talking with his company, as well as another.

Oitbha lived happily with Xailoun, gave a good education to her children, settled them advantageously in Bagdad, and continued to draw the admiration and good-will of the public, by her beneficence, till the time of her death, which followed soon after her husband's, and was a subject of grief to all who knew her.

"Well, sister," said Dinarzade, when she had ended the story of Xailoun, "we have not interrupted you in your tale; and yet it contains a great deal of low stuff. But you have suggested one idea to us, which cannot be absolutely as you represent it. Your story seems to hint, that if Oitbha's husband had been a man of better sense, he could never have made his fortune, and still less could his wife have made him enjoy the wealth which chance threw into their hands. This reflection would lead one to think, that there is in all things, even in stupidity, a certain desirable point of perfection. You have, besides, carried us about through Bagdad; so that

that we are somewhat fatigued, and have been sometimes in danger of being suffocated among the crowd. You surely, therefore, owe some sort of compensation to us,—as well as to your hero and mine, Caliph Haroun Alraschid. You have shewn him in a light not the most advantageous. Till you can recollect some other of the incidents of his youth or middle life; relate, if you please, the adventures of the Princess Ifetilsone his daughter, and Simouftapha. We shall in these see the setting radiance of that sun of justice, still distinguished by all those illustrious qualities which adorned his earliest days, and shone with full splendour through his middle life.”—“ Sister,” replied Scheherazade, “ the story is long; and I will not put your patience, and my Lord the Sultan’s, to such a trial, without receiving his orders.” Schahriar with pleasure commanded; and the fair Sultana proceeded as follows.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

